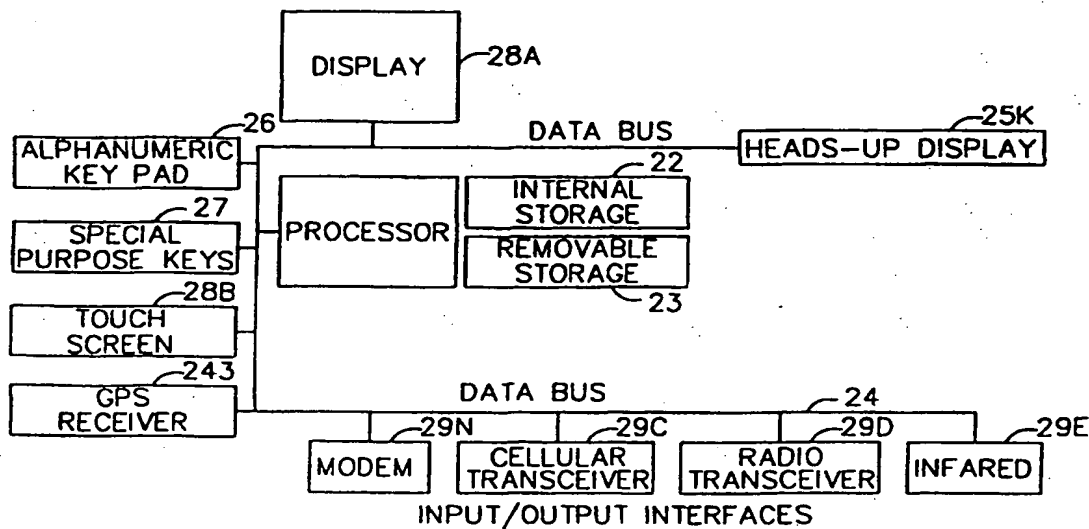


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(54) Title: PERSONAL COMMUNICATION AND POSITIONING SYSTEM



(57) Abstract

A location tagged data provision and display system. A personal communication device, or PCD (20), with electromagnetic communication capability (29C, 29D, 29E, 29N) has a GPS receiver (243) and a display (28a). The PCD requests maps (219) and location tagged data from data providers and other for display on the PCD. The data providers respond to requests by using searching and sorting schemes to interrogate databascs (245) and then automatically transmitting data responsive to the requests to the requesting PCD.

PERSONAL COMMUNICATION AND POSITIONING SYSTEM

FIELD OF THE INVENTION

The invention relates generally to a system for communicating data including global-positioning-encoded information. In particular, the present invention relates specifically to a device and system for communicating and retrieving position and position related data.

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

Availability of up-to-date information is more important today than ever before and this will continue to be true for the foreseeable future. People want to be well informed, so much so that they travel with cellular phones, beepers, and even portable hand-held Global Positioning System (GPS) satellite receivers.

GPS capable devices generally have a GPS receiver for receiving satellite signals from the GPS satellite network that allow for determination of the device's position. Such devices allow for precisely locating the device in terms of latitude and longitude using the GPS receiver. Some devices have map data stored in memory and a display for showing the device position with reference to the map data. Other devices have no underlying map data base for reference. Rather, they show only the geographic coordinates of the device's location. These coordinates may be referred to as waypoints. Most GPS receiver devices can store many waypoints. Some GPS receiver devices can plot and display a trail of waypoints and store this trail for future retrieval. Sophisticated devices may compute the device's heading, speed, and other information based on comparisons with previous GPS determined positions.

GPS receiver devices with map display capability may store the map information on computer diskettes, CD-ROM's, or other computer memory storage devices. The device location may then be displayed on a display terminal with reference to a map stored in the computer memory storage device. The available quantity of map data, however, can overwhelm the memory capability of easily portable computer devices. This problem is exacerbated when additional information is included and linked with the map data. In addition, information is more valuable when it is up to date and available at the time of consumption, and such devices do not incorporate a means for updating the stored information. By way of example, a CD ROM could never maintain an up-to-date list of every 5-star restaurant.

Some GPS receiver devices have the ability to communicate over a telecommunications network. These devices do not provide for automatic or semi-automatic dynamic exchange of on-line position dependent or related information. In addition, these devices cannot communicate with third parties in the absence of a uniform data format standard. For example, a cellular-phone-based system comprising GPS location information working in conjunction with proprietary Public Safety Answering Point (PSAP) telephone equipment is known. The device provides personal and medical information on an emergency basis to the proper authorities. Such

1 a device does not allow third parties to communicate, tag, interrogate, limit, designate, modify
or share this information amongst themselves for any other use.

5 To that end, the ability to receive digital data structures with GPS encoding, and storing
this information for eventual use or broadcast to third parties, would be valuable. Today, the
U.S. and several other countries have independent publishers busily GPS mapping everything
down to the most minute detail. Most of these data bases are available on CD ROM storage.
The problem is that no one data base can contain enough information to fulfill the unique
requests of every particular and picky consumer. The costs associated with providing and
maintaining such a large data base would be overwhelming and over-burdening. Additionally,
10 most consumers do not like reading or compiling vast data bases.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

15 The system of the present invention utilizes Personal Communications Devices (PCDs),
and traditional computer systems with GPS engines, routers, and other application programs to
request, process, and transmit tagged GPS encoded information. The system, with related
applications, can be accessed by device users, traditional computer users, web-site users
(cyberspace), data publishers, public or private enterprises or individuals, by means of
application programs. The tagged GPS encoded data files can be stored or sent via
communication links using AM, FM, spread spectrum, microwave, laser or light beam in free
20 or fiber optic, line-of-sight, reflected, satellite, secure or non-secure, or any type of
communications between multiple points that the application or the state-of-the-art may allow.
The system is a waypoint tag and interrogation system using various protocols to answer requests
and provide GPS-encoded information. The applications use GPS devices, engines, routing and
encoding for access to specific requester-designated data retrieval requests. The applications
25 access fax machines, beepers, telephones and other communication linked devices. The system
accesses computer and storage systems with various applications in order to provide this
information from a plurality of providers. The system thereby eliminates or reduces the need for
large storage devices and interchangeable storage modules.

30 One embodiment of the present invention includes a requesting device, a data provider
(hardware and software), a user, tagger applications or GPS engine and router system with
protocols for encoding, tagging, modifying, interrogating, arranging, limiting, displaying,
sorting, mapping, segregating, sending, receiving and updating waypoint and the waypoints
connected data structures with digital or graphic maps, digital voice files, linked digital web files
properly encoded and tagged by way of specific devices, or by traditional computer and storage
35 systems.

The application programs contain protocols for users, providers, taggers, list maintenance
organizations, and others, and will use a dynamic identification system from applications

1 containing GPS search engines, route planners, compilers, designators, publishers, and others to permit communication of information.

5 The PCD is a cellular-phone-sized electronic device, combining the capabilities of a GPS receiver, transceiver, digital beeper, cell phone and projection system into one compact unit. The PCD is capable of uploading emergency information (medical, police alert, etc.) via a one-push button that phones 911 or a security monitoring center similar to those used for house alarms. The alert continues to be broadcast until a response is made.

10 The PCD is also capable of downloading information via a request to a data provider, similar to a request for directory information from a phone company or other service. In this mode the PCD acts similar to calling a phone operator for information. However, in this instance, no human contact is required. The caller requests specific information (location of gas stations, names of restaurants, local banks, etc.) via a voice command ("Download e.g., Wells Fargo Banks") or via digital commands using a keypad or other input device and the requested information is automatically downloaded to and stored in the memory of the user's PCD. This information can be accessed off-line via the screen on the PCD. It is all done digitally, eliminating having to write down information such as name, address, location map, GPS latitude and longitude encoding, direction and distance to location, hours of operation, or other items of information. The PCD can be plugged into an automobile input port or similar device, if available, and provide distances and directions to locations of interest. Similar information of a condensed nature can also be provided to the user via the screen of the PCD. The user is not required to be a subscriber to some proprietary system, instead the PCD can use any means to access any data base from any potential provider, whether GPS encoded or not.

25 In some areas the information would be sent and received by way of a Local Area Broadcast via radio frequency signals to each home, car or PCD within a reception area. In such an embodiment, users are able to access companies listed on the broadcast network from data providers of properly tagged, yellow page-type information or are provided with GPS encoded information and maps similar to web page listings. This would be advantageous to small towns with little information available for travelers, but which have an interest in providing up-to-date traffic, weather and travel advisories to benefit the local community and businesses. Such a system does not require a master, home or base unit. The providers of data base or advertising information could be a single data provider and could also be individual users with application programs that allow provision of such data. The application programs provide a means for sending and receiving data, GPS encoded data and graphics encoded data. The application programs can also act as a universal coder/decoder to other proprietary GPS data bases.

30 The present invention allows users to request detailed information relating to their present location as well as information related to distant locales. Some of the advantages provided by the invention include:

1. Information can be received digitally by a PCD user from any system.

- 1 2. Multiple requests can be retained, stored or resent.
3. In-depth dynamic data retrievals are possible and could be viewed later.
4. GPS tagging and encoding with latitude and longitude information along with
 encoded maps for navigation.
- 5 5. Small non-contiguous map segments are possible.
6. On-line storage of data personal and other information, along with GPS encoded
 maps on some data files.
7. Display menus, interfaces and applications can be viewed on heads-up display
 systems in automobiles, homes, businesses and various commercial applications.
- 10 8. Allows for portable Internet access.
9. Provides a means for an Internet based telephone directory access tagged and
 linked to the originating area code and phone numbers.

Remote and distant third parties could communicate with each other and, by sending and
receiving GPS encoded data, can meet or find each other in remote locations. Maps and other
15 digital data may be transmitted/received by fax, beeper (receive only), computer, phone and
radio.

The system also utilizes a system of non-subscribers communicating to each other in a
similar fashion, without the use of base stations. In addition, the non-subscribers could send
personal data bases with maps included, GPS information, and other information of non-related
20 data or graphics from publishers of any such data base. In this embodiment the device would act
as a transceiver, sending and receiving dynamic moving waypoint information in digital formats,
including maps of various sizes and embodiments.

The PCD can display a singular or a plurality of images and displays, project an image
on to a screen or viewing surface, store or communicate data (depicted as a line, graphic, icon,
25 etc.) to and/or receive latitude and longitude data from third parties. Additionally, the device can
send/receive latitude- and longitude-encoded maps and other data to/from a third party,
send/receive standard or non-standard phone and fax communications (AM, FM, spread
spectrum, microwave, laser or light beam in free or fiber optic, line of sight, reflected, satellite,
secure or non-secure, or any type of communications between two points that the application or
30 state-of-the-art may allow), perform computer functions from existing application software and
operating systems, receive standard or non-standard beeper messages, interface with a
conventional computer and provide an interface to a heads-up display, an external viewing
device or any projection system.

An embodiment of this invention incorporates a GPS transceiver with a designated
35 application used with a communication system or network. Several users can communicate and
send data, maps and graphic files with or without GPS encoding. By example, a user could
request from sensing, weather, or condition reporting devices details concerning remote

1 locations. These sensing, weather, and condition reporting devices may also be accessible over
cable land lines or other communication media.

5 In one embodiment of the device and tagging system information is communicated from
locations, homes, businesses, commercial designations, government resources, public and private
areas, cyberspace and other communication systems. Various designated locations, or a plurality
and multiplicity of locations, or data structures, are assigned as waypoints. These waypoints
could be tagged, or interrogated from an application program which describes, encodes, reports,
10 modifies and communicates this encoded information and data from any location. In addition,
the transmitting device may report a plurality and multiplicity of locations or events unrelated
to either the location of either the transmitting or receiving device. Indeed, the device could
communicate to many unlinked, unreported or unconnected waypoints and send active dynamic
information to the requester. Cyberspace providers may enter the network web system, use
applications for device communications and participate in the exchange of information using
15 designated GPS engines and applications. By way of example, the invention can provide a
requester with dynamic location information, or other data to a location anywhere in the U.S.
This location information may be used to locate individuals in determining whether to authorize
credit requests, whether PCD or item containing a PCD, such as an automobile, is moved, or in
routing electronic communications.

20 The system is similar to the world wide web, except the web does not use GPS engines,
applications, tagging systems, etc. By way of example, one difference is that the invention uses
GPS devices, engines, applications and encoding for access to specific requester designated data
retrieval techniques. Indeed, the invention provides a means to locate specific individuals both
physically and in terms of an electronically accessible location.

25 Another advantage the invention provides is a means to display this type of
information and a means to store data unrelated to any interrogation by the PCD device.
Methods of display include multiple of displays including, by example, overhead displays,
heads-up displays, projection systems, LCD displays, computer displays or any past or future
designed displays whether connected directly or by some electromagnetic means. The preferred
embodiment of the device could include any means of display or combinations thereof. In
30 addition, the device could include many control devices such as remote control, remote mouse
type devices and any combination of keyboards.

35 Further objects, features and advantages of the invention will become apparent from the
following detailed description taken in conjunction with the accompanying drawings showing
an illustrative embodiment of the invention in which like parts are designated by like reference
numerals throughout.

1 DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

FIG. 1 illustrates a GPS transceiver system and communication links incorporating the present invention;

5 FIG. 2 is a front perspective view of a PCD of the present invention showing a layout of controls and an initialization screen;

FIG. 3 is a rear view of the PCD of FIG. 2;

FIG. 4 is a block diagram of the PCD of FIG. 2;

FIG. 4A shows a screen menu hierarchy of the PCD of FIG. 2;

10 FIG. 5A illustrates a flow chart depicting the program sequence for the entry of a personal identification number (PIN) and personal data into the PCD of FIG. 2

FIG. 5B illustrates a flow chart depicting the program sequence for the user to select a mode of operation using the PCD of FIG. 2;

FIG. 5C illustrates a flow chart depicting the program sequence for the user to control the GPS mode of the PCD of FIG. 2;

15 FIG. 5D illustrates a flow chart depicting the program sequence for the user to control the phone mode of the PCD of FIG. 2;

FIG. 5E illustrates a flow chart depicting the program sequence for the user to control the computer mode of the PCD of FIG. 2;

20 FIG. 5F illustrates a flow chart depicting the program sequence for the user to control the radio mode of the PCD of FIG. 2;

FIG. 6 illustrates the Main Menu page of the PCD of FIG. 2;

FIG. 7 illustrates the select GPS Function page of the PCD of FIG. 2;

FIG. 8 illustrates the GPS: Location page of the PCD of FIG. 2;

FIG. 9 illustrates the GPS: Show Me page of the PCD of FIG. 2;

25 FIG. 10 illustrates the GPS: Get Map page of the PCD of FIG. 2;

FIG. 11 illustrates the GPS: Third Party page of the PCD of FIG. 2;

FIG. 12 illustrates the FAX page of the PCD of FIG. 2;

FIG. 13 illustrates the Beeper page of the PCD of FIG. 2;

FIG. 14 illustrates the Phone page of the PCD of FIG. 2;

30 FIG. 15 illustrates an Information Request page of the PCD of FIG. 2;

FIG. 16 illustrates the Computer page of the PCD of FIG. 2;

FIG. 17 illustrates the Radio page of the PCD of FIG. 2;

FIG. 18 illustrates the Receive Queue page of the PCD of FIG. 2;

FIG. 19 illustrates the Send Queue page of the PCD of FIG. 2;

35 FIG. 20 illustrates a typical listing downloaded from a data provider;

FIG. 21 illustrates a typical GPS encoded map downloaded from a data provider;

FIG. 22 illustrates a typical GPS encoded map with waypoints locating restaurants within a specified radius;

1 FIG. 23A illustrates an exemplary data provider;
FIG. 23B illustrates an exemplary configuration of a non-PCD computer utilizing a
modified application module;
FIG. 24 illustrates a software module configuration of a requester;
5 FIG. 25 illustrates a software module configuration of a provider;
FIG. 26 illustrates a software module configuration of the application module;
FIG. 27 illustrates a software module configuration of the tagging system;
FIG. 28 illustrates a software module configuration of the GPS engine;
FIG. 29 illustrates a software module configuration of the universal translator;
10 FIG. 30 illustrates a typical configuration of the service provider;
FIG. 31 illustrates a possible configuration of the digital web TV;
FIG. 32 illustrates the Weather Map Request page of the PCD of FIG. 2;
FIG. 33 illustrates a weather reporting device;
FIG. 34 illustrates a block diagram of the condition reporting device of the present
15 invention;
FIG. 35 illustrates several condition reporting devices of FIG. 34 deployed along an
arterial route;
FIG. 36 illustrates a block diagram of a cable television distribution system for condition
reporting devices of the present invention;
20 FIG. 37 illustrates a process for using route information to obtain information concerning
the availability of condition reporting devices;
FIG. 38 illustrates a PCD displaying a trail plot with condition reporting device locations;
FIG. 39 illustrates a process of a manual method of obtaining condition reporting device
information;
25 FIG. 40 illustrates a PCD display showing information received from a condition
reporting device;
FIG. 41 illustrates a process of the automatic handoff method for obtaining condition
reporting device information;
FIG. 42 illustrates a process of the automatic sequence method for obtaining condition
30 reporting device information;
FIG. 43 illustrates a display of a PCD display showing a user's route comprised of
multiple segments;
FIG. 44 illustrates a block diagram of a local area transmission system for providing
multimedia information;
35 FIG. 45 illustrates a process of obtaining cell site based information;
FIG. 46 illustrates a process of credit authorization;
FIG. 47 illustrates a process of determining alternative route travel times.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE INVENTION

FIG. 1 shows a system capable of communicating using the electromagnetic energy spectrum, traditional computer networks, cellular phone networks, public telephone networks, and satellite system networks. The major components of the system comprises personal communication devices (PCDs) 20 and one or more of the following: a cellular phone network 60, a standard phone line network 70, an electromagnetic energy spectrum network 80 and/or a computer network 90. The PCD receives signals from a GPS satellite system 10.

FIG. 2 illustrates a PCD of the present invention. The PCD has a display 28a. The display may be of a LCD type or other types known in the art. Incorporated with the display is a touch screen input device 28b, which are known in the art. The PCD also has a alphanumeric key pad 26, which includes many of the standard keys generally found on computer keyboards. The location of the keys, and the selection of the characters used on a single key, may be varied as desired. The PCD also has specialized keys 27a-g, n related to GPS, telecommunications, and other functions. Located on one side of the PCD are a number of input and output ports. In the embodiment shown, these ports include a modem output port 29g, a generalized communication port 29f, a power port 35b, an infrared port 29e, and a heads-up display interface port 25k. The location of these ports are shown for descriptive purposes only, the specific location of these ports on the PCD is not critical. The power port allows the PCD to be operated from an external power source (not shown). The communication port allows the PCD to be connected to printers, local computer networks, and the like.

FIG. 3 shows a rear view of the PCD of FIG. 2. The rear of the PCD contains a microphone 34 towards one edge of the rear of the PCD and a speaker 33 towards the opposing edge. The layout of the microphone and the speaker is similar to that found in portable cellular telephones. An antenna 32 extends from the edge near the speaker to allow for communication in a cellular telephone network or via other electromagnetic spectrum means. The PCD contains a battery 38a. The battery allows for mobile operation of the PCD and is the selected power source if an external power source is not available through the power port. The PCD's operation is governed by a processor 21. A variety of microprocessors may be used, with the selection of such determined by processing power, power utilization, and other factors and requirements. The PCD has a slot 23 for a PCMCIA card, CD-ROM, or other computer accessory. The PCD is powered on when the power button 31 (shown in FIG. 2) is depressed. In the embodiment shown, at initial device power on, the processor causes the PCD to display the initialization screen 100 (shown in FIG. 2).

FIG. 4 shows a block diagram of the PCD. Control and logic functions are performed by the processor 21. Internal data storage 22, which is provided by conventional memory such as RAM or ROM or variations thereof, may be accessed by the processor. The processor may also access removable data storage devices 23 such as a hard disk installed via the PCMCIA slot, a CD-ROM type device or other similar removable data storage devices. The processor is

1 connected by a data bus 24 to a number of devices. These include the alphanumeric key pad and
other special purpose keys, the touch screen, and other hard wired input devices. The heads-up
display output port and the display screen are also connected via the data bus to the processor,
it being recognized that a number of display related devices such as VGA cards, chips, and the
5 like are also required to implement the display device functions and the other previously
mentioned functions. The microprocessor may also access or control communications with
telephone networks, either hardwired or cellular, radio transmissions, infra-red transmissions,
or communications with other computer devices.

10 All known verbal commands from GPS systems can be implemented and attachment or
inclusion of voice activation for map instructions relative to location, GPS and street
designations, including heading descriptions, distance, and arrival time estimates can be
included.

15 FIG. 24 illustrates a block diagram of the PCD's software components. An application
module or program 51 interfaces with the PCD's operating system 241. The operating system
may be DOS, UNIX, Windows 95, Windows NT, O/S2 Apple McIntosh, Next Computer, or
other operating systems, including operating systems well suited to devices with constrained
memory or other limitations due to the small physical size of the PCD. The operating system
20 additionally interfaces with other application programs 242 that provide standard file edit and
other functions typically found in personal computers. The operating system, or other
application programs interfacing with the operating system, provide for maintenance of data
bases 245 used by the PCD. The application module includes a GPS engine 53 providing GPS
functions, including interfacing with the GPS receiver 243 (shown in FIG. 4). A query menu
program 54 of the application module controls the graphical user interface and related functions
for the device. Included in the application module is a universal converter 55.

25 As illustrated in FIG. 29, the universal converter enables the PCD to read in data
provided by third parties 291a, b and convert or filter such data to a format useable by the PCD.
The universal converter first inspects the received data to determine if the data is in a known
format which can be converted to the format used by the PCD. If the format is not known by the
device, the universal converter attempts to extract any ASCII data or format the data as a bit map
30 as appropriate.

As illustrated in FIG. 26, the application module further includes programs to implement
data formatting and communication protocols using header protocols 271, layer protocols 272,
and data provider protocols 273. The application module also includes a tagging system
interface program 274. The elements of the tagging system are illustrated in FIG. 27. The
35 purpose of the tagging system is to provide a common universal data structure for requests and
responding to requests. Various techniques common in the GEO coding industry, using U.S.
Census bureau data and tiger files with certain modifications, can establish parameters for
software suppliers to use latitude and longitude encoding as coordinate pairs, postal code

1 encoding and street centering encoding, all for the benefit of accuracy in designating certain files as "tagged". The tagging system provides the ability to apply and strip header and layer information to and from data files.

5 FIG. 4A shows the top level page menu display hierarchy of the PCD. At initial power on the initialization page 25a (shown in FIG. 2) is displayed. The initialization page allows for the entry of a personal identification number and other data. Depressing the home button 27E (shown in FIG. 2) displays the Main Menu page 25b. A number of additional pages are available from the Main Menu page. These include the GPS 25c, Fax 25d, Beeper 25e, Phone 25f, Computer 25g, Radio 25h, Send Queue 25i, and Receive Queue 25j pages.

10 FIG. 5A lists a sequence for the operator of the PCD to answer certain questions, provide information for future access regarding handling of emergency events and handling of same by civil authorities or private individuals empowered to act on behalf of the operator. Access is denied or provided based upon user codes. The entry of a user code may allow for limited to full access of the data stored in the device and usage of same with different codes providing different levels of access and usage. Similar information and sequencing is provided by the application modules and operating system for medical and other information in the event of emergencies. In one embodiment of the preferences screen (not shown) information can be displayed in a specified manner, events recorded and equipment options listed. Specific usage of the device and furnished software would be recalled by each user having access and user codes to operate the PCD, each user having unique individual screens and setups based on that user's preferences. The initial setup of screen preferences and other user configuration details are well known in the art.

25 Selecting PIN 111 from the Main Menu page displays a screen 113 prompting the user to input a personal identification number. Using an alphanumeric key pad 26, the user inputs a personal identification number and presses ENTER 27g. The processor analyzes the entered personal identification number and determines if the number is valid 115 FIG. If the entered personal identification number is valid the processor enables PERSONAL 121, MEDICAL 131, PREFERENCES 141 touch points on the display screen. These touchpoints, and touchpoints later referred to, are selectable either by pressing the display screen at the touchpoint location or by selecting the underlying display item with the cursor. If the PCD already contains personal, medical and preference data, the HOME button 27e is enabled. If the personal identification number is not valid, the processor 21 will increase the device security level 119. This may include, but is not limited to, disabling the PCD operation for a specified time. Selecting PERSONAL 121, MEDICAL 131 or PREFERENCES 141 touchpoints displays the corresponding pages 123, 133, or 143. These pages request specific data, and allow the user to input data using alphanumeric key pad 26. Completion of data entry is indicated by pressing the ENTER button 27g.

1 In addition, the Initialization page 100 FIG. 2, as well as all other pages, displays the time
and the date 103, touch points for QUE IN 550 and OUT 600 (described later in this document)
and limited GPS information 107. The limited GPS information comprises of the user's location
5 (latitude and longitude), an arrow pointing to north and an arrow indicating direction of device
travel.

When enabled, pressing the HOME button 27e (FIG. 2) signals the processor to display
the Main Menu page 150 FIG. 5B. As shown in FIG. 6, the Main Menu page allows the operator
to use the touch screen to select the GPS 200, FAX 300, BEEPER 350, PHONE 400,
10 COMPUTER 450, RADIO 500, RECEIVE QUE 550 and SEND QUE 600 touchpoints. The
heading and directional information are displayed in real time and are dynamic. Pressing the
FAX touchpoint causes the processor to display a Fax page (shown in FIG. 12) which lists
received facsimile messages 301. The Fax page includes display interfaces appropriate for the
sending and receiving of facsimile communications through the FAX Phone Modem port 29g,
and such displays and functions are well known in the art. Pressing the BEEPER touchpoint
15 causes the processor to display a Beeper page (shown in FIG. 13). The Beeper page displays
received beeper messages 351 and allows for the deletion of such messages from the display and
internal memory storage. Also, a sub-menu portion of the display 151 is reserved for sub-menus
and directories.

Pressing GPS 200 causes the processor 21 to display a GPS Function page 201, which
20 is illustrated in FIG. 7. The GPS page provides for selection of a GPS mode through touch
points in the sub-menu portion of the display. The available modes are location 210, show me
230, get map 250 and third party 270 modes. The display returns to the GPS Function page
when the PREVIOUS button 27i (shown in FIG. 2) is pressed. The display hierarchy for the
GPS functions is illustrated in FIG 5C. The Location, Show Me, Get Map, and Third Party
25 pages descend from the GPS Menu page. The Location page comprises the current map, the
location on the map of the device, and a plot of the trail of the device on the map. The sub-menu
portion of the display provides for additional selection of still further pages. These pages include
a Menu page, a Mode page, a Waypoint page, and a Preferences page.

The Location page is illustrated in FIG. 8. The Location page includes a GPS map 219
30 (latitude and longitude encoded coordinate pairs). The sample page shown is an encoded map
showing the device position, plot trail and the encoded map location of the selected waypoint.
The map displayed could be from on-board memory or sent by other third parties by way of
communication links to the PCD. When map data files are encoded with location information,
the location information can be referred to as waypoints. These tagged waypoints, with links to
35 other data structures, can then be sent to users via an application to various communication
systems. Closed-loop or proprietary GPS receivers can send/receive data to/from other third
parties (Brand X, Brand Y) via their own proprietary format using an application system as a
universal converter. The location information is dynamic and updated periodically by the PCD's

1 communication system via link-up with GPS-based satellites. The Location page indicates the
PCD position 801, indicated by a walking person, as being located on a highway 810. A
waypoint 802 is along the highway en route to the desired destination address 803 located on a
5 local street 804 which intersects the highway. A first point of interest 807 is also displayed as
being along the highway, as is a second point of interest 805 along a second local road
intersecting the highway. The limited GPS information, providing location, heading and north,
is also displayed. The illustrated Location page display shows only one possible combination
of a map layout. Other display sequences such as North up, course up, user at top of screen, user
10 in middle, and other display sequences are possible. The dynamic nature of the PCD allows the
PCD to display GPS encoded maps as the PCD progresses dynamically with relation to the maps.

Using interpolation techniques, performing spatial query analysis, and establishing layers
for best display scale for any given map record allows the device to provide the user extended
capability not possessed by traditional GPS devices. Applying various protocols and
interpolation techniques allow files to be arranged geographically by distance from a designated
15 point (usually the requesters latitude and longitude as the starting point, but other locations may
also be used). The maps are also arranged in layers, menus, limited, listed, showed, displayed,
and sorted.

The Location mode provides typical GPS system functions. The touch points MENU
213, MODE 215 and WAYPOINT 217 and PREFERENCES 221 provide access to the Menu,
20 Mode, Waypoint, and Preferences pages. These pages, along with various buttons on the
alphanumeric key pad 26 FIGS. 2 and 4 and special function buttons 27, are used to configure
the display to the user's preference. The preferences page 221 enables selection of such features
as voice, maps, scroll, off screen maps away from cursor and other features. The listing name
219 portion of the Location page displays information pertaining to a waypoint selected through
25 the use of the cursor.

FIG. 9 illustrates the Show Me page accessed from the GPS page. The Show Me page
shows a list of available maps 901a-i stored on-board, which includes maps retrieved from the
receive queue area of the PCD memory. The user can load a map into the location or third party
pages by pressing the corresponding number key on alphanumeric key pad 26 (shown in FIG 2)
30 or by scrolling through the list to highlight the appropriate map and then pressing ENTER button
27g. Maps may also be removed from on-board storage using the DELETE button 27h.

FIG. 10 illustrates the Get Map page accessed from the GPS Menu page. The user of the
PCD can request the map by location from PCD memory or an external source. The user may
enter a desired map location. If a map location is entered, the PCD will only search PCD
35 memory for a map for the entered location. Maps from an external source are downloaded via
any of the communication links such as the FAX, BEEPER, PHONE or RADIO touchpoints
provided in the sub-menu portion of the display 151. Depending on the user's requirements,
several maps could exist showing similar map areas with different layers for viewing. By way

1 of example, airport maps with air space requirements, coastal waterway, maps, and interstate
maps, and even hand drawn maps scanned into a computer system all show different resources
within a given geographic area. These maps, when presented on the PCD, could over-saturate
the display map detail for any given map area. Therefore, it is preferred that the actual map
5 displayed be selectable. Maps are retrieved by pressing QUE IN 550, scrolling to highlight the
desired map, and pressing ENTER 27g FIG. 2.

FIG. 11 illustrates the Third Party page accessed from the GPS menu page. The Third
Party page provides an interface to communications with a third party through touch points in
the sub-menu display 151. In the display shown, a user can receive a third party's data and GPS
10 encoded map for viewing on the device or save it for future usage. The user can also
dynamically track the third party by periodically having the third party send updates via normal
communication links. The third party location can be displayed on maps dynamically sent by
map publishers, maps already on-board (furnished at some earlier date), or on maps sent by the
third party. The PCD plots and interpolates the GPS data sent by the third party and places an
15 icon 951 (GPS latitude and longitude coordinate pair) on the displayed map using spatial query
analysis techniques performed by an application module. The information received from the
third party may be other than maps or GPS encoded information, but may be information of any
type. The data is received from the third party using phone 400 and radio communication links
500. A PREFERENCES touch point 274 enables entry of items such as phone numbers for
20 automatic call back and time interval for automatic transmission of information. If the radio, a
satellite phone, or other frequency based communications link is utilized, the PREFERENCES
touch point allows entry of frequencies for use for automatic transmission of information. A split
screen displays the user's location on a map on the left side of display 272 and, after contact with
a third party via a communication link, the third party's map and location on the right side of
25 display 273. If the third party's location is sufficiently close to the user's location, or if the
user's displayed map covers a sufficiently large area, both the user's and third party's location
can be shown on the same map without resort to a split screen display.

The Fax page is accessed by pressing the FAX touchpoint on the Main Menu page.
FIG. 12 illustrates the Fax page. The sub-menu portion of the display is available for listing
30 previously stored phone numbers. These phone numbers are selectable as a facsimile
destination. In addition, the user can directly enter the phone number to indicate the facsimile
destination. As with other pages, the PCD continues to dynamically display the limited GPS
information of location, north and heading. The PCD facsimile function is performed by
application software executed by the processor. Multiple fax locations, time set, send after
35 certain time, and other traditional functions of fax machines and their implementation are well
known in the art. The Fax page provides for display of a message (not shown) entered via the
alphanumeric key pad 26 (shown in FIG. 2) or through selection of messages stored in the send
queue area of device memory. Messages stored in the queue area of PCD memory can be

1 selected by scrolling through a directory 305 of all fax messages stored. To view a stored
message the user uses the SCROLL button 27a (shown in FIG. 2) to highlight an entry, and then
press ENTER button 27g. Pressing the SEND button 27b transmits the selected or entered
facsimile. The user may also view received faxes using this mode by pressing QUE IN 550 Fig
5 12, using the SCROLL button 27a to highlight the desired message, and pressing the ENTER
button 27g.

The Beeper page is accessed from the Main Menu page. Pressing the BEEPER touch
point on the Main Menu page causes the processor to display the Beeper page. The device
contains capabilities consistent with common practices of beepers, also known as pagers, such
10 as sending and receiving messages. These functions and their implementation are well known
in the art. The PCD is also satellite communications capable. Beeper messages can be received
by the PCD without interference to the other device capabilities. Therefore, the user could
continue using the telephone or other features seemingly uninterrupted by the reception of digital
beeper messages and display of those messages. The Beeper page provides a list of beeper
15 messages (not shown) stored in the receive queue area. Messages stored in the receive queue can
be selected by scrolling through listing 353 FIG. 13 of all beeper messages stored. To view a
stored message, the user uses the SCROLL button to highlight a desired message and presses the
ENTER button 27g. Messages are deleted when the DELETE button is pressed with at least one
message selected.

20 The Phone page is illustrated in FIG. 14. The Phone page is accessed from the Main
Menu page. Pressing the PHONE touchpoint on the Main Menu page causes the processor to
display the Phone page. The Phone page is also accessed by pressing the PHONE touchpoint
on the Get Map and Third Party pages. As with the other pages, the limited GPS data is
continuously displayed showing PCD location, heading, and north. The PCD can access several
25 areas of the display even while the PCD is being used as a telephone. Information provided in
the display area 1401 will vary depending upon the page from which the phone page was
accessed. The Phone page provides for selection of a function through touch points displayed
in the sub-menu portion of the display. The selectable touchpoints are: POLICE 403,
MEDICAL 405, DATA PROVIDER 407, DIRECTORY 413, and MEMORY 415.

30 When the POLICE touchpoint is pressed, the PCD places a call to emergency 911. The
911 telephone number is the default, another number could instead have been entered for any
particular user through the preferences selection. Once the telephone call is answered, the PCD
provides the information entered using the Preferences function and the device location. The user
may also establish voice and data communications through the microphone 34 and speaker 33
35 (shown in FIG. 3).

The PCD performs equivalent functions when the MEDICAL touchpoint is pressed. As
different phone numbers and information can be entered in the selection of user preferences,
however, different phone numbers may be used and different information may be transmitted.

1 When the DATA PROVIDER touchpoint is pressed, the processor displays the Data
Provider Connect page. The Data Provider Connect page provides a means to specify the type
and amount of data to be downloaded from a specified data provider. The Data Provider Connect
page has numerous data fields which are selected by use of the cursor. Once a field is selected,
5 the user may enter data in that field using the alphanumeric keys. The data fields include data
for name, city, state, map area, zip code, telephone area code, retail category, distance from
device location, and maximum number of listings to be provided by the data supplier. Whether
a map only is requested and what particular types of maps, such as interstate maps, walking area
maps, zip code maps, street maps, area code maps, or state maps, are requested are also provided
10 as options. Touch points for weather information and traffic reports are also provided. Once the
appropriate data fields and/or type of data required is input or selected, pressing the send key
transmits the data request to the data provider. Details regarding the method of transmission of
the responsive data is automatically sent by the data provider to the data provider along with the
data request.

15 The primary data providers may include the public telephone company networks but may
also include other entities. The data providers maintain data, including maps, telephone yellow
page entries, and other information such as traffic and weather reports. This information is
maintained in a timely manner and is accessible through the use of data base methods well
known in those in the art. Upon receiving a request for data, the data provider determines the
20 nature of the data request, searches the appropriate data base or data bases, and transmits the
requested information to the requesting device in the manner specified by the requesting device.
The user, after the PCD receives the data as requested, disconnects, goes off line to review the
information, deleting some, saving others, and storing other encoded information on the PCD.
The user can now further edit the device's entire data base and decide a sequence for navigating
25 to the locations listed in the various menus as waypoints. Thus users of the PCD can decide to
navigate using the GPS features of the PCD and select certain waypoints and the order in which
to proceed. By way of example, but not limited to same, users could select gas stations, banks,
restaurants, shopping centers in unfamiliar areas, navigate today from one point of beginning and
tomorrow continue navigating from another point of beginning, being assured that the device will
30 always know how to get to various locations. Should the user require further locations to visit,
the PCD is capable of obtaining new navigational data and adding to the already active route
plan without having to completely start over.

 Pressing the DIRECTORY touchpoint 413 displays an alphabetical listing (not shown)
of phone numbers stored on-board. The user may scroll through the listing and select a desired
35 phone number. Pressing MEMORY 415, displays an alphabetical listing (not shown) of
frequently used phone numbers. The user may scroll through the listing and select a desired
number. Pressing the SEND button causes the device to dial the selected phone number.

1 FIG. 16 illustrates the Computer page. The Computer page is accessed by pressing the
COMPUTER touchpoint 450 (shown in FIG. 6) on the Main Menu page. The Computer page
allows the user to operate the device as a standard personal computer utilizing application
programs of the type normally present on personal computers. As examples, the display of
5 FIG. 16 provides for touchpoints in the sub-menu portion of the display for calendar date entry,
notes, and organizer application programs. As with the other pages, the limited GPS information
is also displayed.

 FIG. 17 illustrates the Radio page. The Radio page is accessed by pressing the RADIO
touchpoint 500 on the Main Menu page. The radio mode provides the user with an interface for
10 selecting the type of radio signal through touch points displayed in the sub-menu 151 area. The
selectable types are: AM 503, FM 507 and TRANSCEIVER 511. Selecting any type will display
a page (not shown) requesting frequency, volume, and other parameters relating to radio
transmission and reception. The AM and FM are standard receivers. The device can thereby
15 tune and listen to broadcasts that provide data links and receive data files using legal AM or FM
radio bands (or any other radio band legal to access and provide radio station information). The
device therefore allows users to communicate information amongst themselves without having
to rely on telephone technology. This is especially valuable when telephone technology is not
available.

 The Receive Queue page displays stored received messages. The received messages may
20 be displayed by reception type through selection of the transmission line type listed in the
sub-menu portion of the display, the selectable types, through touch points displayed in the
sub-menu 151 area, are: ALL 553, FAX 555, BEEPER 557, PHONE 559, COMPUTER 561 and
RADIO 563. Selecting a type, will sort (by specified type) and display (by date and time) all
messages received. By way of example, the radio queue contains GPS-encoded voice mail or
25 digital files (containing information to various sites) provided by private third-party sources.
The phone system queue contains previous calls with digital messages linked to web pages
containing voice and video data. The computer which may be queued contains personal letters,
calendars, notes and the like from more traditional sources or user created tagged files for
storage. The fax queue contains traditional faxes which may illustrate maps with waypoints.
30 The beeper mode queue contains received beeper messages (digital and voice).

 The Send Queue page is accessed by pressing the SEND QUE touchpoint on the Main
Menu page. The Send Queue page includes similar functions as the receive queue, except the
Send Queue is a staging area for sending messages. The Send Queue page displays sent or
to-be-sent data and an interface for selecting the specific type of queue. The selectable types,
35 through touch points displayed in the sub-menu portion of the display 151, are: ALL 603, FAX
605, BEEPER 607, PHONE 609, COMPUTER 611 and RADIO 613. Selecting a type, will sort
(by specified type) and display (by date and time) all messages sent or waiting to be sent.

1 FIGS. 23 A and B are a system block diagram including a block diagram of a data
provider. A plurality of PCDs 231, 232, 233 communicate with each other using the
aforementioned communication means. The PCDs also communicate with various data base
5 information suppliers including private data base information suppliers, publisher data base
information suppliers, telephone service data base information suppliers, and a data base
provider. The data base provider receives digital requests for map information or other data
regarding a geographic area. The data provider collects map data and other data and tags the
other data to the map data and maintains the map and location tagged data in a data base. Human
intervention is not required in responding to data requests.

10 As shown in FIG. 23B, the application module of the device is ported to a computer
system not GPS capable, or merely not portable so as to have no need for a GPS receiver. The
application module allows non-PCD based computer users to provide data to the data provider
in the correct format, as well as receive data from devices or the data provider. This allows the
non-device base computer user to track the location of devices and to collect information to be
15 manually entered into a traditional GPS capable device as an aid in future trip planning.

FIG. 20 illustrates a list of GPS encoded data for a restaurant listing of restaurants in a
requested area. This list may have been furnished by third parties or a data provider. The PCD
has stored this information in digital format and is displayed on a GEO coded map, GIFF map
or any other map the PCD stored in memory or receives from a third party or data provider. The
20 information can be arranged by the PCD using criteria enabling the user unlimited access to the
data. If the user chooses to navigate to these locations singularly or as a group, the GPS engine
performs these functions, allowing a user of the device to accurately travel to the desired
restaurant. As shown in FIG. 21, the PCD can use any scale of map or combinations and other
types of maps as shown. The user of the PCD selects certain maps for storage and recalls same
25 when needed for navigation. By way of example, the user's device could have a local Los
Angeles street map, an interstate map (as shown in FIG. 21), and a New York city map in device
memory. The user could navigate to the airport using the GPS functions and stored Los Angeles
map, fly to New Jersey, rent a car and navigate to New York using the interstate map and,
finally, find a specific restaurant in New York City by using the third map stored in PCD
30 memory.

As shown in FIG. 22, the PCD contains a map with various waypoint locations the user
has selected. These waypoints are both standard waypoints 221 and linked waypoints 222. The
waypoints are indicated by a marker on the display. Standard waypoints indicate identifiable
locations of interest. Linked waypoints have additional data associated with the waypoint. The
35 additional data may be text data, visual data such as a photographic image of the waypoint, or
an audio data file. When the marker for the linked waypoint is selected using the touch screen
or other input device, the processor determines if the additional data associated with the
waypoint is available in the PCD memory. If the additional data is not available in the PCD

1 memory, the PCD automatically requests the additional data from a data provider. Once the additional data is available, the PCD displays or otherwise makes use of the additional data.

5 Using the map of FIG. 22, the user could navigate to a school, restaurant, bank, gas station, government office using the PCD to interpolate using spatial query techniques to find the best routes to each location. The PCD can re-collate the list for the most efficient route using the application and GPS engine modules. Using software programming techniques and math formulas, persons skilled in the arts will utilize spatial analysis queries and functions to determine best routing and "closest to" scenarios. In addition, centroid interpolation functions and match-rate comparison functions used by the GEO coding community will further enhance this application's ability to universally communicate with other systems.

10 FIG. 30 further illustrates a system whereby the user uses a PCD to dial a direct access number similar to dialing 411, but all requests are requested and serviced automatically. Upon connection to the system, the user makes keyboard requests to the PCD or traditional computer system using the application program of the PCD. Upon requests being received by the data provider or similar information provider, the provider or supplier searches the data base for data responsive to the request. The provider or supplier can access further data through data links to other third party sources and continue to provide all data required by the requester. This system is consistent with the world wide web, linking data through hypertext connections and designations. This invention's system converts information requests to data requests, not verbal requests, as presently being practiced in directory assistance type services. This narrow usage of the application module allows convenient access to directory assistance that primarily provides data and chunks of information in a short period of time consistent with directory assistance today.

15 FIG. 31 shows a web page screen with a data provider icon displayed on the device. Pressing or otherwise selecting the icon will enable a menu for the requester to specify a data request. Download will be in the form of a compressed digital data file that may include video, sound, or other digitally encoded data.

20 FIG. 32 illustrates a Weather Map Request page. The Weather Map Request page is accessed by pressing the Weather button 27n (shown in FIG. 2) on the PCD. The Weather Map Request page allows the PCD user to specify the map location and scale, the map type, whether the selected map should be automatically updated at specified intervals, and whether a set of maps should be displayed in a sequential fashion. The PCD displays a number of different types of weather maps, including satellite images, radar maps, temperature maps, wind chill maps, and any other type of weather map available. Some weather information is more perfectly provided by showing a sequence of displays indicating the change in weather over time. Therefore, the PCD allows the operator to sequentially display a set of maps, thus providing an animated map display.

1 FIG. 33 illustrates a weather reporting device. The weather reporting device has a power
port 334 to provide electrical power to the weather reporting device. As with the PCD, the
weather reporting device may also be powered by a battery (not shown). The weather reporting
device also has a computer port 335, an interface port 333, an antenna port 332, a pressure access
5 port 331a, and a number of auxiliary ports 331b-e. The computer port provides a
communications interface to a standard personal computer or the PCD. The interface port
provides an interface to systems with weather detection features, such as aircraft with weather
radars or lightning strike finders. The antenna port allows an external antenna to be connected
to the weather reporting device, thereby providing remote operation capability. The pressure
10 access port provides external access for an internal pressure sensitive device (not shown) for the
determination of barometric pressure. A plurality of auxiliary input ports 441b-e provide an
interface for connecting the weather reporting device to external weather detection sensors such
as temperature sensors, wind sensors, and other weather sensing devices.

15 In one embodiment the weather reporting device additionally includes a coaxial cable
port, a fiber optics port, and a telephone line port. The coaxial cable port allows the weather
reporting device to be attached to a cable television distribution system. Attachment to the cable
distribution system allows the device to transmit information over the cable distribution system
to a central office of a cable television network. The fiber optic port similarly allows the weather
20 reporting device to be attached to a fiber optic communications network. The fiber optics
communication network may be either a cable television distribution system or a telephone
distribution system. The telephone access port allows for the connection of the weather reporting
device to a standard telephone network.

25 A condition reporting device is a weather reporting device, but with increased
capabilities. The condition reporting device further includes a radio radar unit similar to those
used by police agencies to detect automotive vehicular speed. Alternatively, the condition
reporting device may be equipped with sonar, infrared, or other distance measuring devices.

FIG. 34 illustrates a block diagram of the condition reporting device (CRD). The CRD
includes a processor 1200, memory 1202, a battery 1204, a speed detector 1206, a digital camera
1208, a radio transceiver 1210, an antenna 1212, a coaxial cable port 1214, and sensors 1216.
30 The memory stores data pertaining to operation of the CRD, including instructions for execution
by the processor which controls operation of the CRD. Specifically, the processor reads data
from the various sensors and transmits data via the transceiver. In one embodiment the memory
additionally stores data pertaining to normal expected conditions, such as normal temperatures
or traffic flow, at the CRD location. This data could take the form of merely the average normal
35 temperature at the site, but more preferably provides daily or hourly normal temperatures and
hourly traffic pattern information.

1 With respect to the use of the radar or other similar unit, the condition reporting device
may be mounted on the sides of freeway overpasses or poles adjacent a vehicular arterial route
to determine automotive vehicular speeds on the freeway or arterial route. Alternatively, the
5 radar unit may be replaced by a sonar unit wherein the use of sound waves are used in place of
radar waves to determine vehicular speed on the freeway or arterial route.

The condition reporting device additionally includes sufficient computer memory to store
at least a single digitized video picture. The single picture is provided to the condition reporting
device through the digital camera, which may be a charged coupled device (CCD) coupled to the
condition reporting device through one of the auxiliary input ports. The condition reporting
10 device may also obtain data representing the single digitized video picture via a direct
transmission to the condition reporting device through the antenna of the condition reporting
device. Thus, photographs in digital format obtained by others, such as television news
helicopters, may transmit a digital picture to the condition reporting device for storage.

The radio transceiver unit allows the condition reporting device to transmit information
15 via radio signals both to end-users and to other condition reporting devices. As illustrated in
FIG. 35, first through fourth condition reporting devices 1220a-d are located alongside an arterial
route 1222. Traveling along the arterial route are automobiles 1224a,b. A home 1226 equipped
with a radio receiver 1228 is located near the arterial route. Specifically, the home is located
most near the fourth condition 1220d reporting device, and most distant from the first condition
20 reporting device 1220a. The automobiles receive information from the condition reporting
devices via radio signals, as does the home, and thus end-users in the automobiles and the home
receive up-to-date information regarding conditions along the arterial.

The end-users, however, may not desire information regarding road conditions from
condition reporting devices which are close enough for the end-users to receive radio
25 transmissions. Accordingly, the condition reporting devices are two-way daisy-chained together.
That is, the second condition reporting device receives information broadcast from the first
condition reporting device and the third condition reporting device. The second condition
reporting device also transmits the information received from the first condition reporting device
and the third condition reporting device in addition to the information specific to the second
30 condition reporting device.

In one embodiment, the transmission of information is accomplished using a
time-interleaf method in which the second condition reporting device transmits the information
received from the first condition reporting device over a first time interval, and transmits the
information specific to the second condition reporting device over a second time interval. In this
35 time-interleaf method each condition reporting device in the daisy-chain is programmed with the
number of other condition reporting devices in the daisy-chain, the transmission frequency the
two closest condition reporting devices in the two-way daisy-chain, the total number of condition
reporting devices in the chain, and the position of the condition reporting device in the chain.

1 The condition reporting device uses this information to determine the time necessary to
receive transmissions from the two closest condition reporting devices in the chain and to
determine the total transmission time for each cycle of transmission of the condition reporting
device. For example, if each condition reporting device is allocated 30 second for transmitting
5 their own information, the total cycle transmission time is two minutes if the first through fourth
condition reporting devices are two-way daisy chained together.

FIG. 36 illustrates a block diagram of a cable television distribution system for the
weather reporting and condition reporting devices. A central cable television office 1230
provides for transmission of television signals over land line 1231 to various locations 1231a-v.
10 The various locations may be residences, businesses, or other users of cable television
distribution services. The land lines may be coaxial cable or fiber optic land lines. A central
cable television office also provides links 1236 to telephone and computer networks for the
transmission of Internet-related data. Thus, the land lines provides two-way communication
between the central cable television office and the various locations.

15 Also attached to the land line are condition reporting devices 1234. The condition
reporting devices are attached to the land line either through the cable access port or the fiber
optic access port, depending on the nature of the land line to the condition reporting devices.
The condition reporting devices transmit digital data corresponding to the data received by the
devices input sensors over the land line to the central cable television office. The central cable
20 television office then transmits digital information received by the condition reporting devices
to the residences in other locations, with each condition reporting device provided a separate
cable television channel.

Thus, in one embodiment condition reporting devices may be located in a variety of
geographic locations throughout a cable television distribution area. Receivers of cable
25 television may set their channels to a channel for a specific condition reporting device and obtain
weather, traffic, and video information for a specific location within the cable television
broadcast area. Moreover, condition reporting devices located in bars, restaurants, and other
venues may transmit video pictures of the interior of such establishments as a form of advertising
for the establishments, as well as for the entertainment of television viewers at home or
30 elsewhere.

The locations of the condition reporting devices are also tracked by a central computer
system. The central computer maintains a database of the locations of condition reporting
devices. For condition reporting devices located along roadways such as streets and highways,
the central computer system also stores in the database an indication of the road or highway
35 along which the condition reporting device is located. Further, many organizations, particularly
state highway departments, maintain digital cameras providing roadway information available
over the World Wide Web (WWW or WEB). The central computer system also tracks locations
of these digital cameras, as well as other non-condition reporting devices.

1 CRD location data may be used in conjunction with route information (plot trail) stored
by the PCD. FIG. 37 illustrates a process for using the route information stored by the PCD to
obtain information concerning the availability of condition reporting devices from the central
computer system along the route stored by the PCD. In step 1240 a request for condition
5 reporting device locations is transmitted by the PCD to the central computer system. Any of the
communication means included with the PCD may be used to form such transmission, with one
embodiment using cellular telephone communication. Included with the request for condition
reporting device locations is data indicating the route information maintained by the PCD. The
route information includes waypoint information for waypoints along the route. Road and
10 highway identifiers are also transmitted when the route information also includes road or
highway identifiers.

In step 1242 the central computer receives the condition report device request from the
PCD. In step 1244 the central computer system determines the locations of condition reporting
devices along the route. If the route information includes road or highway identifiers, then the
15 central computer system identifies condition reporting devices along such roads or highways, and
also determines the condition reporting devices along such roads or highways within the latitude
and longitude constraints, as indicated by waypoints, of the route. This process is performed for
each road or highway identified in the route information as being along the route. If the route
information does not include road or highway identifiers, then the central computer system
20 determines the locations of condition reporting devices within one-tenth of a mile of the route.
The central computer system of course need not be limited to reporting condition reporting
device locations within one-tenth of a mile of the route. Other distance values may be used, and
the PCD may also transmit a requested search criteria to the central computer system for use by
the central computer system.

25 In step 1246 the central computer system transmits condition reporting device locations
along the route to a PCD. For each such condition reporting device, the central computer system
also transmits information identifying methods of communication with the condition reporting
devices. For example, some condition reporting devices may make data available over computer
networks such as the Internet or World Wide Web. Other condition reporting devices may only
30 transmit information via radio communications within a small area, or may be part of a linked
condition reporting device system allowing for radio communication over larger areas.

In step 1248 the PCD receives the locations of reporting devices. In step 1250 the PCD
correlates the condition reporting device locations to the route information and forms a map
display indicating the trail plot and the condition reporting device locations the process then
35 returns.

FIG. 38 illustrates a display of a PCD displaying a trail plot with condition reporting
device locations. As illustrated, the trail plot is indicated by a thick line. The thick line follows
a first route 1262 until the first route intersects a second route 1260. The plot trail thereafter

1 follows the second route. The locations of condition reporting devices 1264a-b are indicated along the route by star symbols (☆).

Three methods are used by the PCD to obtain condition reporting device information, a manual method, an automatic hand-off method, and an automatic sequence method.

5 FIG. 39 illustrates a process of the manual method. In the manual method the user of the PCD slews the cursor over the reported location of the condition reporting device in step 1270. In step 1272 the user selects the condition reporting device identified by the cursor. In step 1274 the PCD determines whether the condition reporting device is communicated with a via a computer network or via radio transmissions. If the condition reporting device is communicated with via a computer network, then the PCD transmits a request to the condition reporting device for data over the computer network in step 1275. If the condition reporting device transmits information via radio communications, then the PCD sets its radio receiver to the appropriate frequency for receiving transmissions from the condition reporting device in step 1276. In step 1278 the PCD receives the information from the condition reporting device. The PCD then formats the data in step 1280 and displays the data in step 1282.

10 FIG. 40 illustrates a PCD display showing information received from the condition reporting device. The information from condition reporting device includes a single digital photo 1284. The information received from the condition reporting device also includes traffic speed indications 1286 and current weather information, including temperature 1288 and wind speed 1289.

20 FIG. 41 illustrates a process of the automatic hand-off method for obtaining condition reporting device information. The automatic hand-off method is similar to the manual method, but the user of the PCD is not required to select condition reporting device locations with the cursor. Instead, the PCD maintains a sequential list of condition reporting device locations along the route. The sequential list is ordered by condition reporting device locations along the route such that a first condition reporting device expected to be encountered along the route is placed first in the list, and the last condition reporting device expected to be encountered along the route is placed last in the list. As the PCD travels along the route condition reporting devices are removed from the list when the PCD comes within a predetermined distance, one-tenth of a mile in the preferred embodiment, of the condition reporting device location.

25 When the user selects COND RPT on the PCD display the PCD determines which condition reporting device is currently first on the list. The PCD then contacts the condition reporting device, as in the manual method, and displays the condition reporting device information, also as in the manual method. Once the PCD comes within the predetermined distance of the condition reporting device the PCD removes the condition reporting device from the list, and automatically requests information from the next condition reporting device along the route and displays such information.

1 Thus, as illustrated in FIG. 41, the process determines an ordered list of CRDs along the route in step 1290. In step 1292, the process causes information from the next CRD to be displayed. In step 1294 the process determines if the CRD whose information is being displayed is within a predefined distance of the PCD. Once the CRD is within the predefined distance the
5 process deletes the CRD from the ordered list in step 1296. In step 1298, the process determines if the list is empty. If the list is empty, the process returns. Otherwise, the process displays information from the next CRD in the list to be displayed in step 1292.

 FIG. 42 illustrates a process of the automatic sequence method for obtaining condition reporting device information. As in the automatic hand-off method, the PCD maintains a
10 sequential list of condition reporting device locations along the route. The sequential list is ordered by condition reporting device locations along the route such that a first condition reporting device expected to be encountered along the route is placed first in the list, and the last condition reporting device expected to be encountered along the route is placed last in the list. Information from each condition reporting device in the sequential list is displayed for a period
15 of time, in one embodiment ten seconds, and then the next condition reporting device in the sequential list is displayed. After information from the last condition reporting device in the sequential list is displayed, the PCD displays information from the condition reporting device first in the sequential list. As in the automatic hand-off method, as the PCD travels along the route, condition reporting devices are removed from the list when the PCD comes within a
20 predetermined distance of the condition reporting device location.

 Thus, as illustrated in FIG. 42, in step 1310, the process creates a travel list comprising
25 a sequential list of CRDs expected to be encountered over the route. The process causes data from the first CRD in the list to be displayed in step 1312. The process then determines if a predefined time period has elapsed in step 1314. Once the predefined time period elapses the process determines if the list is empty in step 1316. If the list is empty the process returns. If the list is not empty the process causes display of data from the next CRD in the list in step 1317.
30 The process then waits predefined time period in step 1318. When the predefined time period elapses the process determines if the end of the sequential list has been reached in step 1320. If the end of the list has been reached the process causes display of information from the first CRD in the list in step 1317. Otherwise, the process causes display of information from the next CRD in the sequential list in step 1317.

35 Thus, in either the automatic hand-off mode or the automatic sequence mode, the user may have a PCD in his automobile and be automatically informed of current road conditions along the expected route. If road conditions are reported as unpassable due to weather or traffic, then the user may appropriately plan to take alternate routes.

1 The use of the PCD in conjunction with CRDs accordingly provides the PCD user the capability to receive up-to-date detailed information regarding conditions along the PCD user's route. This allows the PCD user to plan use alternative routes as conditions warrant. Such planning is further enhanced by an alternative route (ALT RTE) function of the PCD.

5 The ALT RTE function of the PCD uses current speed information from CRDs along the user's route, and alternatives to the user's route, to determine travel times. FIG. 43 illustrates a PCD display showing a user's route 1300 comprised of multiple segments 1300 a-d. The user's route follows a first street 1300a, a first highway 1300 b, and a second highway 1300c. Roads and highways near the users route include a second street, a third street 1304, and a fourth street 1306. The user's route includes a segment A which follows the first street 1300a in a southerly direction to the first highway 1300b, which runs in a east-west direction. The user's route then has a segment B which follows the first highway 1300b in a westerly direction until the first highway intersects the second highway 1300c, which runs in a north-south direction. The user's route then has a segment C which follows the second highway 1300c until the termination of the route at the intersection of the second highway 1300c and the fourth street 1306.

10 Alternatively, the user could take a route including a second street 1302 which runs in a east-west direction, a third street 1304 which runs in a north-south direction and intersects the second street and the fourth street 1306. The second street is comprised of a segment D from the user's start point to the third street, and a segment E from the third street to the second highway. The third street is similarly comprised of a segment F and a segment G.

20 Condition reporting devices 1308a-j are located at various points along the streets and highways. The condition reporting devices provide traffic speed and weather indications through the PCD via methods discussed above. The map information made available to the PCD and stored by the PCD contains distance information. The PCD therefore is able to make use of the traffic speed information and the distance information to determine travel times for the various route and route alternative segments. Real time calculation and display of segment travel times accordingly allows the PCD user to accurately determine and estimate travel times to particular destinations over a plurality of different roads and road segments.

25 FIG. 47 illustrates a process of determining travel times. In step 1390, the process reads route information stored by the PCD. In step 1392, the process determines if the user has provided alternative route segments. If the user has provided alternative route segments the process reads information describing the alternative route segments in step 1394. Otherwise, the process determines alternative route segments in step 1396. Regardless, if the source of the alternative route segments, the process determines travel times for each of the route segments; and the route as a whole, in step 1398. The process then returns.

30 FIG. 44 illustrates a block diagram of a local area transmission system for providing multimedia information using GPS navigation system coordinates. Data 1330 pertaining to a

1 local geographic area is maintained by cellular telephone system providers or other entities. The
particular local geographic locations are based on the locations of cell sites for cellular telephone
networks, and the location specific data is transmitted by a cell site 1332 both over a standard
radio broadcast system using a radio transmitter 1334 and by request to the cell site via a
5 telephone access number. This data includes ASCII or other text formats, digital graphical
images, including maps, digital photo-based images, and audio data.

In the radio broadcast system method of transmitting data, a first radio frequency is used
to inform receivers of the radio broadcast of specific frequencies to be used to obtain particular
types of data. The specific frequencies continually transmit data pertaining to services and
10 information of the type specified for the particular frequency. The data includes text and
graphics normally including names, addresses, phone numbers and GPS locational information
for providers of the services of the type for that frequency. Additionally, digital GPS maps for
the particular cell site broadcast location are also included.

Similarly, each cell site location is provided a specific telephone number. Users of
15 cellular telephone-capable devices call the number and are in turn provided a list of telephone
numbers for providing data equivalent to the data provided by the radio broadcast system. Two
sets of phone numbers are provided. The first set provides voice audio information, and the
second set provides information in digital form. In one embodiment, users of a PCD then direct
the PCD device to obtain digital text, graphical maps, and GPS location information from the cell
20 site telephone number. This information may then be used by the user of the PCD device to
determine route information and to obtain data in the same manner as from other GPS tagged
data providers.

FIG. 45 illustrates a method of directing a PCD to obtain restaurant-related information
from the cell site telephone number. In step 1340 the PCD displays a screen having PHN #,
25 PHN/EMAIL, and RTN ADDRS entry fields. The user enters the cell site telephone number in
the PHN # entry field, P or E in the PHN/EMAIL entry field, and either the phone number of the
PCD or an e-mail address in the RTN ADDRS entry field. In step 1342 the user enters
information in the PHN #, PHN/EMAIL, and RTN ADDRS entry fields. If the user enters P in
the PHN/EMAIL entry field, then the user should also enter the phone number of the PCD in the
30 RTN ADDRS entry field. If the user enters E in the PHN/EMAIL entry field, then the user
should enter an e-mail address in the RTN ADDRS entry field.

In step 1344 the user selects the TRNSMT option and the information entered by the user
in step 1342 is transmitted by the PCD to the cell site telephone number. In step 1346 the cell
site computer system determines which information pertains to the cell site telephone number.
35 In step 1348 the cell site computer system determines whether the information transmitted by
the PCD included a P or an E in the PHN/EMAIL field. In step 1352 the cell site computer
system instructs the cell site to transmit the information pertaining to the cell site telephone
number to the phone number transmitted by the PCD in the RTN ADDRS field if the

1 PHN/EMAIL field contains a P. In step 1350 the cell site computer system transmits an e-mail message to the e-mail address transmitted by the PCD in the RTN ADDR field if the PHN/EMAIL field contains an E.

5 Each cell site data provider additionally provides traffic and weather information for the cell site. By way of example, a central data provider may receive weather and traffic information from weather reporting devices and condition reporting devices and store that data by the latitude and longitude location of those devices. This data may be then transmitted over a particular frequency or made accessible by having users call a particular telephone number so that individuals may obtain accurate and timely weather and traffic information regarding specific localities.

10 The PCD also serves as a position monitoring device. To begin the position monitoring function the user selects the monitor on the PCD. Upon selecting the monitor function, the PCD displays a menu including INTERROG, AUTO-TIMED, and MOVE options. When the INTERROG function is selected the PCD will display an e-mail entry field allowing input by the user of an e-mail address. After the e-mail address is entered, the PCD responds to appropriate interrogatories by transmitting its current position. An appropriate interrogatory includes the security code active when the INTERROG mode was selected and an Internet e-mail address. Upon receipt of an appropriate interrogatory the PCD will transmit the GPS receiver determined latitude and longitude of the device to the e-mail address.

20 If the user selects the AUTO-TIMED option the PCD displays a time entry field and an e-mail address entry field. After entry of the time entry field and the e-mail address, the PCD will count down the time period entered by the user, and, upon the completion of the time period, transmit an e-mail to the entered e-mail address indicating the PCD location. After transmitting the PCD location to the e-mail address, the PCD will begin counting down the time period previously entered by the user, and once again transmit the PCD location upon the completion of the time period. Thus, for example, if the user enters the time 30 minutes into the time field and the e-mail address of abc@def.com, then every 30 minutes the PCD will transmit the PCD location to abc@def.com.

30 When a user selects the MOVE option the PCD displays a distance entry field and an e-mail address entry field. After entry of the distance field and the e-mail address field, the PCD transmits an e-mail containing the device location to the e-mail address specified in the e-mail field whenever the PCD moves a distance greater than the distance entered in the distance field. When the PCD transmits an e-mail indicating the device position, the current device position is stored and the PCD waits until the device has moved the distance specified in the distance field from the current location prior to again transmitting the PCD location to the e-mail address specified in the e-mail address field.

35 Thus, the PCD can be used to monitor the locations of individuals utilizing PCDs. For example, credit authorization agencies may make use of the location monitoring capability

1 provided by the PCD in determining the validity of credit requests. FIG. 46 illustrates a method
of credit authorization using the PCD. In step 1360 an individual makes a request for credit.
This may be accomplished in a variety of manners, including "swiping" a credit card through a
5 credit card reader at a gas station, supermarket, or a variety of other locations, or merely by
providing a credit card to a retail clerk who thereafter requests credit authorization. The request
for credit may be made to a credit card issuer, or may merely be a request for credit authorization
by a credit reporting facility.

In step 1362 the request for credit is transmitted to a credit authorizer. In step 1364 the
credit authorizer determines whether credit authorization is appropriate in view of the credit
10 authorizer's prior art credit authorization practices. Such prior art practices include the use of
credit limits, past credit usage, and other factors. If the credit authorizer determines that credit
authorization according to prior art practices is not appropriate, then credit authorization is
denied in step 1366. If credit authorization according to prior art practices is appropriate, then
the credit authorizer transmits an interrogatory to the individual's PCD in step 1368. In step
15 1370 the credit authorizer waits a predetermined time for a response from the PCD. In step 1371
the credit authorizer determines if a response from the PCD has been received. If a response
from the PCD has been received, the credit authorizer determines if the PCD location is
consistent with the request for credit in step 1372. This may be accomplished by determining
if the PCD is at the location from which credit was requested. If the reported location is
20 consistent with the request for credit, then the process grants or authorizes credit in step 1378.
If the reported location is not consistent with the request for credit, the process denies credit in
step 1366. If no response is received from the PCD, the credit authorizer determines if previous
PCD reported locations are consistent with the location from which credit was requested in step
1374. For example, the credit authorizer may have received responses from previous requests
25 for position from the PCD, or an e-mail address of the credit authorizer may have been entered
by the individual for AUTO-TIMED or MOVE position updates. If the previous location is
consistent with the request for credit, then the process grants or authorizes credit in step 1378.
If the previous locations is not consistent with the request for credit, the process denies credit in
step 1366.

30 Additionally, PCDs can be used to monitor automobile locations and thereby discourage
automobile theft or aid in the recovery of the automobile. For example, for an active PCD left
in the INTERROG mode, upon discovery of the theft of the PCD or item in which the PCD is
located, the user merely need to interrogate the PCD as to its location and thereafter be
immediately informed as to the device location, thus allowing for ease in locating and returning
35 the device to the proper user.

As another example, the user can leave the active PCD in MOVE mode, with the user's
e-mail address designated as a recipient of the location of the PCD device. Thus, whenever the
PCD, or object in which the PCD is located, is moved the user can receive instantaneous

1 notification of the movement of the PCD and any object carrying the PCD. Further, in one
embodiment of the invention, the user may select a SECURITY option from the main menu. In
the SECURITY option the PCD is automatically configured in the MOVE mode, and the PCD
is also automatically configured to transmit an e-mail to a user defined address in addition to any
5 other addresses specified in the MOVE mode. The user defined address is preferably that of a
police agency or security service. Further, in one embodiment of the invention, the PCD
additionally places a telephone call via the PCD's cellular telephonic capabilities to a user
defined telephone number. Upon answer by the receiving telephone the PCD automatically
transmits an indication, which may be a prerecorded voice message, that the PCD has moved
10 from its prior location. In addition, the user defined telephone number may be the universal
telephone number of the user, which is later herein described. In the event the predefined
telephone number is the universal telephone number of the user the PCD additionally transmits
a password corresponding to security level. The password and security level are selected by the
user, and are also later herein described in conjunction with the universal telephone number.

15 In accordance with the present invention, the central computer system also maintains
information in a database allowing individual users to be easily located both physically and in
terms of their electronic communication locations. The central computer system maintains a
database of individuals and an Internet address linked to each individual. The Internet address
linked to each individual need not be a unique address, but instead many individuals may make
20 use of a single computer indicated by the Internet address in the Internet address field. For
example, for many cases the central computer system may be the computer system identified by
the Internet address.

The system also contains a large number of computer systems linked by the Internet, and
which are the computer systems pointed to by the address field for the individuals in the Internet
25 address field. Each of these computers form a home site computer system. The responsibility
of maintaining the home site computer systems are the responsibility of the individuals.

The home site computer system maintains electronic contact information and geographic
location of the individual. The electronic contact information includes home telephone numbers,
office telephone numbers, cellular telephone numbers, fax numbers, and e-mail addresses. The
30 geographic location is provided in terms of latitude and longitude, although street addresses or
site names can also be provided with the latitude and longitude.

Also linked to each electronic communication identifier in geographic location
information is a security level index. In one embodiment, the security level index is a number
between one and ten. The individual assigns security level indexes for each item of information.
35 The user also identifies other individuals who may wish to contact the user, and indicates which
security index level each such other individual should be provided. Other individuals who are
not identified by the user are provided a default security level index. When the home site is
contacted by another individual, the other individual provides an identifier, such as the

1 individual's name to the home site. In one embodiment the other individual also provides a
password to the home site so that the home site may authenticate the identity of the individual.
Based on the identity of the individual, preferably authenticated, the home site determines the
other individual's security level index.

5 The other individual is thereafter only able to obtain information for the other
individual's security level index value and those values below the other individual's security
level index. For example, a user's general office work number may be assigned a security level
index of ten, with the user's direct line phone number provided a security level index of six. A
first other individual with a security index level of seven can only obtain the user's general office
10 number while a second other individual with a security index level of six can also obtain the
user's direct line phone number.

The user's geographic location is updated through the PCD. As previously discussed,
the PCD can be used to provide e-mails indicative of the user's location in varying manners.
When the user's home site computer system is identified as an e-mail address for such updates,
15 the user's home site computer system may track the user over time. In one embodiment of the
invention, the user's home site computer system is always provided a copy of any e-mail position
updates provided by the PCD.

The capability to track individuals is further enhanced through the use of condition
reporting devices. For example, a particular user is identified as being at a particular location,
20 other individuals may request via the central computer system the location of condition reporting
devices in that area. If the condition reporting device has digital picture capability, then the other
individuals may request information from the particular condition reporting device and determine
if the user is in fact at the location. Thus, the system of the present invention provides a method
and system for tracking individuals, and for confirming the presence of individuals at particular
25 locations.

In another embodiment of the invention, the user's home site computer system maintains
a universal phone number, fax number, and e-mail address for the individual. When other
individuals try to contact the user via the general phone number, fax number, or e-mail address
the home site computer system automatically routes the incoming call, fax, or e-mail to the
30 phone number, fax number, or e-mail address currently indicated as active for the individual.
This routing is done, however, in conjunction with the other individual's security index level.
Thus, if the active phone number for the user is the user's cellular telephone number, but the
other individual does not have a security level index sufficient to determine the user's cellular
telephone number, then the call to the user by the other individual will be automatically routed
35 to the phone number with the highest number security level index available to the other
individual. If the telephone number to which the other individual has been routed is not currently
active for the user, the other individual will be left in a voice mail or other automatic answering

1 system if available. Thus, users may selectively forward phone calls, facsimiles, or e-mails depending on requirements of the user.

5 The home site computer system maintains data indicative of the location of telephone numbers, fax numbers, and e-mail addresses. As the user's geographic location is updated through use of the PCD, the home site computer system automatically maintains a list of active phone numbers, facsimile numbers, and e-mail addresses for the user. Thus, if the user's geographic location as provided by the PCD indicates that the user is at the user's office, then the user's office phone numbers are made active. If the user's geographic location as provided by the PCD indicates that the user is at the user's home, then the user's home phone numbers are made active. If the user is at an undetermined location, then the user's home site computer system identifies the user's cellular telephone as the active phone. Thus, phone calls, facsimiles, and e-mails may be automatically routed, using call forwarding technology known in the art, to the electronic communication access number of the user without resort to sequentially calling various phone numbers.

15 In addition, in order to contact an individual only the universal phone number, facsimile number, and e-mail address need be known. Thus, as actual phone numbers and e-mail addresses change due to changes in telephone area codes, zone prefixes, or changes in the locations of homes and businesses, individuals need only update the information maintained by their home system in order to be able to be contacted by those desiring to communicate with them via electronic means.

20 The user's home site computer system also serves as a repository for data for use with the user's PCD. One purpose in providing such a repository is that the PCD may be unable to store all data requested from a data provider or other parties due to device memory constraints. For example, the user may request a map of a relatively large area and a relatively great amount of detail. Such a map may be too large for storage in the memory of the PCD. The user could request a subset of the desired map, if such a request or map is available, and request further subsets of the map as desired. Such a method, however, entails repeated requests for map information, and is also inconvenient if a single map section is repeatedly later used after other map sections are requested. Accordingly, the home site computer system provides a repository for such material. Data providers and information suppliers, instead of downloading data directly to a PCD in response to a request for information by a PCD, instead route data to the user's home site computer system.

25 30 35 In one embodiment, requests from a PCD for data include an indication of allowable memory space for downloaded data. The allowable memory space may be automatically determined by the PCD based on the total device memory and the memory available at a given time. Thus, if a particular PCD can only accommodate additional data of 8 megabytes or less, the request for information would indicate a maximum download data size of 8 megabytes. Alternatively, the allowable memory space may be set by the user.

1 After the data provider or other information supplier receives a request for information,
the data provider or information supplier then transmits the requested data to the home site
computer system, via e-mail or other means described herein, in multiple files, each less than the
maximum memory size of the PCD. The data provider or information supplier determines which
5 information, such as map information is responsive to the request, and prepares individually
readable and displayable files, or data packets, less than the allowable memory size. The user
may thereafter request the data directly from the home site computer system, and later reuse the
same information at the user's convenience. In addition, the user is also able to use the requested
data using other PCDs, or even other computer systems.

10 While this invention has been described with reference to illustrative embodiments, this
description is not intended to be construed in any limiting sense. Various other embodiments
of the invention will be apparent to persons skilled in the art upon reference to this description.
It is therefore contemplated that the appended claims will cover any such modifications of the
embodiments as fall within the true scope and spirit of the invention.

1 CLAIMS:

1. A condition reporting device comprising:
a processor;
5 a computer memory storing information, the computer memory being accessible by the processor and containing at least location identification information;
at least one weather condition sensor providing external information to the processor, the processor storing the external information in the computer memory;
a vehicular traffic condition sensor providing vehicular traffic information to the
10 processor, the processor storing the vehicular traffic information in the computer memory; and
output means for transmitting information in the computer memory.

2. The condition reporting device of claim 1 further comprising video input means
15 for inputting video information representing a video image into the computer memory.

3. The condition reporting device of claim 1 or 2 further comprising data input
means for inputting data in digital form into the computer memory.

4. The condition reporting device of claim 3 wherein the at least one weather
20 condition sensor includes an anemometer, a temperature sensor, a humidity sensor, a rain gauge, and a barometer.

5. The condition reporting device of claim 3 wherein the vehicular traffic sensor is
25 a radar device.

6. The condition reporting device of claim 3 wherein the vehicular traffic sensor is
a sonar device.

7. The condition reporting device of claim 3 wherein the vehicular traffic sensor is
30 an infrared device.

8. The condition reporting device of claim 3 wherein the data input means for
inputting data in digital form into the computer memory receives data from other condition
reporting devices.

9. The condition reporting device of claim 8 further comprising a clock providing
35 timing information to the processor, and wherein the output means for transmitting information in the computer memory transmits the information at a preset interval.

1 10. The condition reporting device of claim 9 wherein the output means for
transmitting information in the computer memory transmits the information when the data input
means for inputting data in digital form into the computer memory receives data indicative of
a request for information.

5 11. The condition reporting device of claim 10 wherein the output means for
transmitting information in the computer memory transmits information received from other
condition reporting devices upon receipt of such information.

10 12. A locating and map downloading system comprising:
a personal digital communicator comprising:
a display;
a receiver for receiving GPS signals;
a first transceiver;
15 a first modem coupled to the transceiver and to a first digital processor;
communicator input means for formatting a request for map information;
the first digital processor providing a means for processing the GPS signals and
determining therefrom the location of the communicator, for transmitting via the first modem and
the first transceiver the request for map information, for displaying on the display map
20 information responsive to the request, and for displaying on the display the communicator
location with reference to the map information; and
a map storage and transmitting device comprising a second transceiver, a second
modem coupled to the second transceiver and a second digital processor, memory for storing
map information in digital form, the second digital processor providing a means for determining
25 which map information stored in the memory is responsive to the request and transmitting via
the second modem and the second transceiver the map information responsive to the request.
The map storage and transmittal device memory stores additionally stored data associated with
discrete data points within the map information and such additionally stored data is transmitted
with the responsive map information.

30 a condition reporting device comprising:
a processor;
a computer memory storing information, the computer memory being accessible
by the processor and containing at least location identification information;
at least one weather condition sensor providing external information to the
35 processor, the processor storing the external information in the computer memory;
a vehicular traffic condition sensor providing vehicular traffic information to the
processor, the processor storing the vehicular traffic information in the computer memory; and

1 output means for transmitting information in the computer memory to the map
storage and transmitting device.

5 13. The locating and map downloading system of claim 12 wherein the map storage
and transmittal device receives the information transmitted by the condition reporting device via
the second transceiver and the second modem and the second digital processor stores the
information transmitted by the condition reporting device in the map storage and transmittal
device memory.

10 14. The locating and map downloading system of claim 13 wherein the map storage
and transmittal device stores the information transmitted by the condition reporting device as
additionally stored data associated with discrete data points.

15 15. The locating and map downloading system of claim 14 wherein the first processor
determines a route to a selected marker.

20 16. The locating and map downloading system of claim 15 wherein the first processor
transmits via the first modem and the first transceiver the location of the selected marker and a
request for locations of condition reporting devices within a predefined distance of the selected
marker.

25 17. The locating and map downloading system of claim 16 wherein the first processor
transmits via the first modem and the first transceiver data indicative of the route to the selected
marker and a request for locations of condition reporting devices within a predefined distance
of the route to the selected marker.

30 18. The locating and map downloading system of claim 15 wherein the first processor
transmits via the first modem and the first transceiver the communicator location and a request
for information transmitted to the map storage and transmitting device from a condition reporting
device closest to the personal digital communicator within a predefined distance of the route to
the selected marker.

35 19. The locating and map downloading system of claim 16 wherein the second
processor determines locations of condition reporting devices within a predefined distance of the
location of the selected marker and transmits via the second modem and the second transceiver
the locations of such condition reporting devices.

1 20. The locating and map downloading system of claim 17 wherein the second
processor determines locations of condition reporting devices within a predefined distance of the
route to the selected marker and transmits via the second modem and the second transceiver the
locations of such condition reporting devices.

5 21. The locating and map downloading system of claim 18 wherein the second
processor determines the condition reporting device closest to the personal digital communicator
within a predefined distance of the route to the selected marker and transmits via the second
modem and the second transceiver the information transmitted by that condition reporting
10 device.

 22. A data distribution system comprising:
 a cable television signal distribution system having a plurality of signal
transmission lines and a signal transceiver, the signal transceiver operably connected to a signal
15 transmission line and transmitting signals over the signal transmission line;
 a sensing device operably connected to at least one of the signal transmission line,
the sensing device transmitting sensing device signals over the signal transmission line to the
signal transceiver;
 the cable television signal distribution system further having a receiver receiving
20 the sensing device signals and providing the sensing device signals to the signal transmitter for
transmission over the signal transmission line;
 a signal selector operably connected to the signal transmission line, the signal
selector selecting a selected signal transmitted over the signal transmission line and providing
the selected signal to a display device.

25 23. The data distribution system of claim 22 further comprising a plurality of sensing
devices operably connected to the signal transmission line, each of the plurality of sensing
devices transmitting sensing device signals over the signal transmission line to the signal
transceiver.

30 24. The data distribution system of claim 23 wherein the signal transceiver assigns
each of the sensing device signals to a different defined bandwidth of frequencies for
transmission over the signal transmission line.

35 25. The data distribution system of claim 23 wherein each of the sensing device
signals includes an identifier identifying the source of the sensing device signal.

1 26. The data distribution system of claim 25 wherein the transceiver assigns multiple sensing device signals to the same defined bandwidth of frequencies for transmission over the signal transmission line.

5 27. The data distribution system of claim 26 wherein the multiple sensing device signals assigned to the same defined bandwidth of frequencies are transmitted by the transceiver over separate time periods.

10 28. The data distribution system of claim 26 wherein the multiple sensing device signals assigned to the same defined bandwidth of frequencies are transmitted by the transceiver over separate frequencies within the bandwidth of frequencies.

15 29. The data distribution system of claim 26 wherein the multiple sensing device signals assigned to the same defined bandwidth of frequencies are transmitted by the transceiver in a manner such that the signal selector is able to distinguish between sensing device signals originating from different sensing devices.

20 30. The data distribution system of claim 26 wherein the identifier identifies the sensing device by latitude and longitude.

 31. The data distribution system of claim 30 signals based on latitude and longitude.

25 32. The data distribution system of claim 31 wherein the selector comprises input means for inputting information relating to the selection of sensing device signals and a processor for selecting a particular sensing device signal based on the information relating to the selection of sensing device signals.

30 33. The data distribution system of claim 32 wherein the information relating to the selection of sensing device signals is a requested latitude and a requested longitude and the processor determines which sensing device signal for the selector to select by determining which sensing device location as indicated by the identifier is closest to the requested latitude and the requested longitude.

35 34. A position monitoring and reporting device comprising:
 a GPS receiver for receiving GPS signals;
 a processor to determine the device location based on the GPS signals and to command transmission of a signal indicative of the device location;

1 communication means responsive to the processor to transmit the signal indicative
of the device location when commanded by the processor; and

5 data entry means to provide transmission criteria to the processor, the
transmission criteria defining at least one event, the processor commanding transmission of the
signal indicative of the device location upon occurrence of the event.

35. The position monitoring and reporting device of claim 34 wherein the
communication means further comprises means to receive digital communication signals.

10 36. The position monitoring and reporting device of claim 35 wherein the
transmission criteria comprises a transmission received by the communication means requesting
transmission of a signal indicative of the device location.

15 37. The position monitoring and reporting device of claim 36 wherein the
transmission criteria comprises a transmission received by the communication means requesting
transmission of a signal indicative of the device location and a security code.

20 38. The position monitoring and reporting device of claim 34 further including a
clock providing a clock signal to the processor, with the processor determines lapse of time using
the clock signal, and the transmission criteria comprises completion of a time period.

39. The position monitoring and reporting device of claim 34 wherein the
transmission criteria comprises a distance.

25 40. The position monitoring and reporting device of claim 37, 38, or 39 wherein the
signal indicative of the device location comprises a digital data indicating the device latitude and
longitude.

30 41. The position monitoring and reporting device of claim 40 wherein the signal
indicative of the device location is transmitted by the communication means to an e-mail address.

35 42. The position monitoring and reporting device of claim 39 wherein the signal
indicative of the device location is a digitized voice message indicating the device latitude and
longitude, and the communication means transmits the signal indicative of the device location
to a predefined telephone number.

43. A method using a computer to determine credit authorization comprising:

1 receiving a request for credit authorization, the request for credit authorization
being indicative of a request for credit from a location by a party, the party being identified with
an interrogable position reporting device;

transmitting an interrogatory to the position reporting device;

5 waiting a predefined time period for a response to the interrogatory;

determining a position-based credit authorization factor, the position-based credit
authorization factor being based on the response, or the lack thereof, to the interrogatory; and

using the position-based credit authorization factor to determine whether to
authorize credit.

10 44. The method using a computer to determine credit authorization of claim 43
wherein the position-based credit authorization factor indicates credit should be authorized if the
response to the interrogatory indicates the position reporting device is at the location and the
position-based credit authorization factor indicates credit should be denied if the response to the
15 interrogatory indicates that the position reporting device is not at the location.

45. The method using a computer to determine credit authorization of claim 43 further
comprising maintaining a record of responses to interrogatories.

20 46. The method using a computer to determine credit authorization of claim 44 further
comprising examining the record of responses to interrogatories when no response to the
interrogatory is received.

25 47. The method of using a computer to determine credit authorization of claim 44
further comprising ascertaining if the location is inconsistent with the record of responses.

30 48. The method of using a computer to determine credit authorization of claim 45
wherein the position-based credit authorization factor indicates credit should be authorized if no
response to the interrogatory is received and the location is not inconsistent with the record of
responses and the position-based credit authorization factor indicates credit should be denied if
no response to the interrogatory is receive and the location is inconsistent with the record of
responses.

35 49. An electronic communication system comprising:
a home site computer system including a processor, memory operatively coupled
to the processor, and an external data communication device operatively coupled to the
processor;

1 the memory storing electronic contact information for an individual and geographic location information for the individual, the electronic contact information comprising a list of communication devices with identifiers, the communication devices being assigned a geographic location;

5 the external data communication device receiving geographic location information for the individual and providing the geographic location information to the processor for storage in the memory; and

the processor including means to determine an active communication device based on the electronic contact information and the geographic location information.

10 50. An electronic communication routing system comprising:

a home site computer system including a processor, memory operatively coupled to the processor, and an external data communication device operatively coupled to the processor, the home site computer system being assigned a telephone number for voice communications, a facsimile telephone number for receiving facsimile transmissions, and an e-mail address;

15 the memory storing electronic contact information for an individual and geographic location information for the individual, the electronic contact information comprising a list of communication devices with identifiers, the communication devices being assigned a geographic location;

20 the external data communication device receiving geographic location information for the individual and providing the geographic location information to the processor for storage in the memory;

25 the processor including means to determine an active communication device based on the electronic contact information and the geographic location information and means to transfer incoming communications to the active communication device.

30 51. The electronic communication routing system of claim 50 wherein the processor includes means to transfer communications to a storage facility if there is no active communication device.

35 52. The electronic communication routing system of claim 50 wherein the memory further stores a list of possible callers, a security level for each of the possible callers, and a password for each of the possible callers, and a security level for each communication device.

53. The electronic communication routing system of claim 52 wherein the processor transfers incoming communications to the active communication device if the security level for

1 a caller, the caller being one of the possible callers, is equal to or exceeds the security level of
the active communication device.

5 54. The electronic communication routing system of claim 51 wherein the processor
transfers incoming communications to the storage facility if the security level for the caller is
exceeded by the security level of the active device.

10 55. A data information provider comprising:
transceiver means for receiving digital data from a first external computer device
and transmitting digital data to a second external computer device;
a computer processor operatively coupled to the transceiver means;
computer memory for storing map data for geographic areas;
a sorting application module executed by the processor responsive to a request
received by the transceiver means, the request including a value indicating an allowable memory
size, from the first external computer device for determining map data responsive to the request;
and

15 a packet application module executed by the processor for forming data packets,
each data packet comprising map data responsive to the request and each data packet smaller
than the allowable memory size.

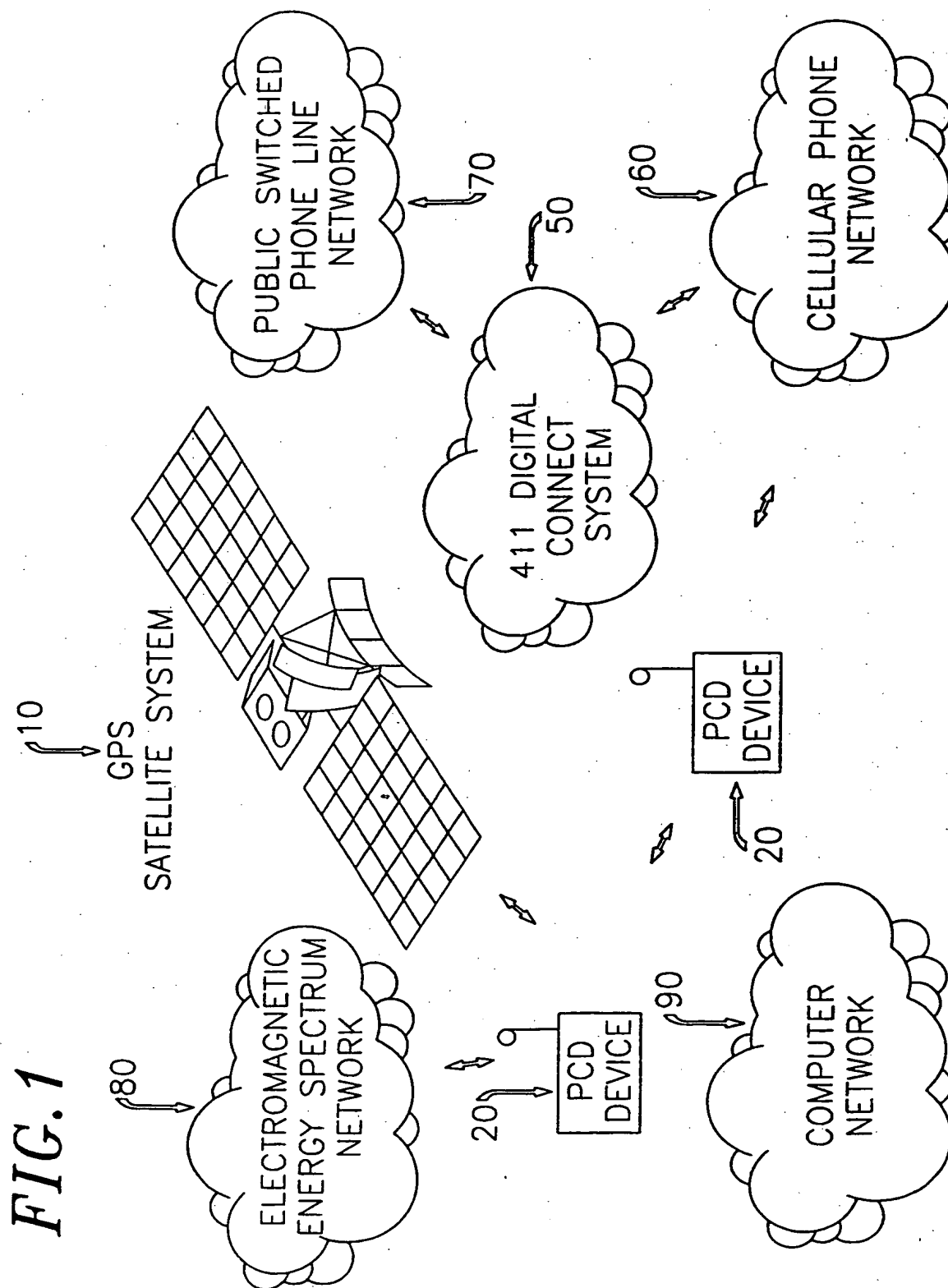


FIG. 2

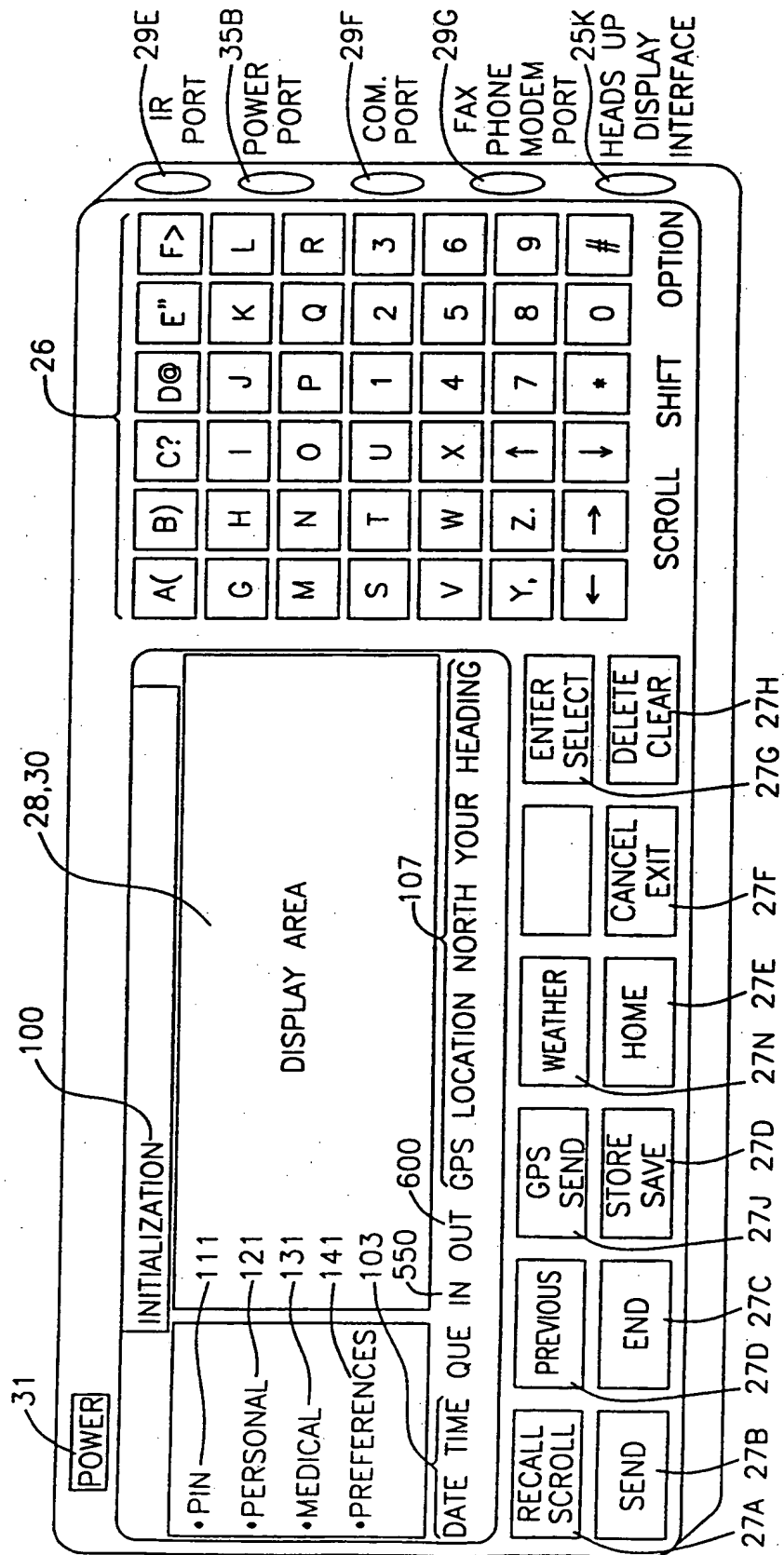


FIG. 3

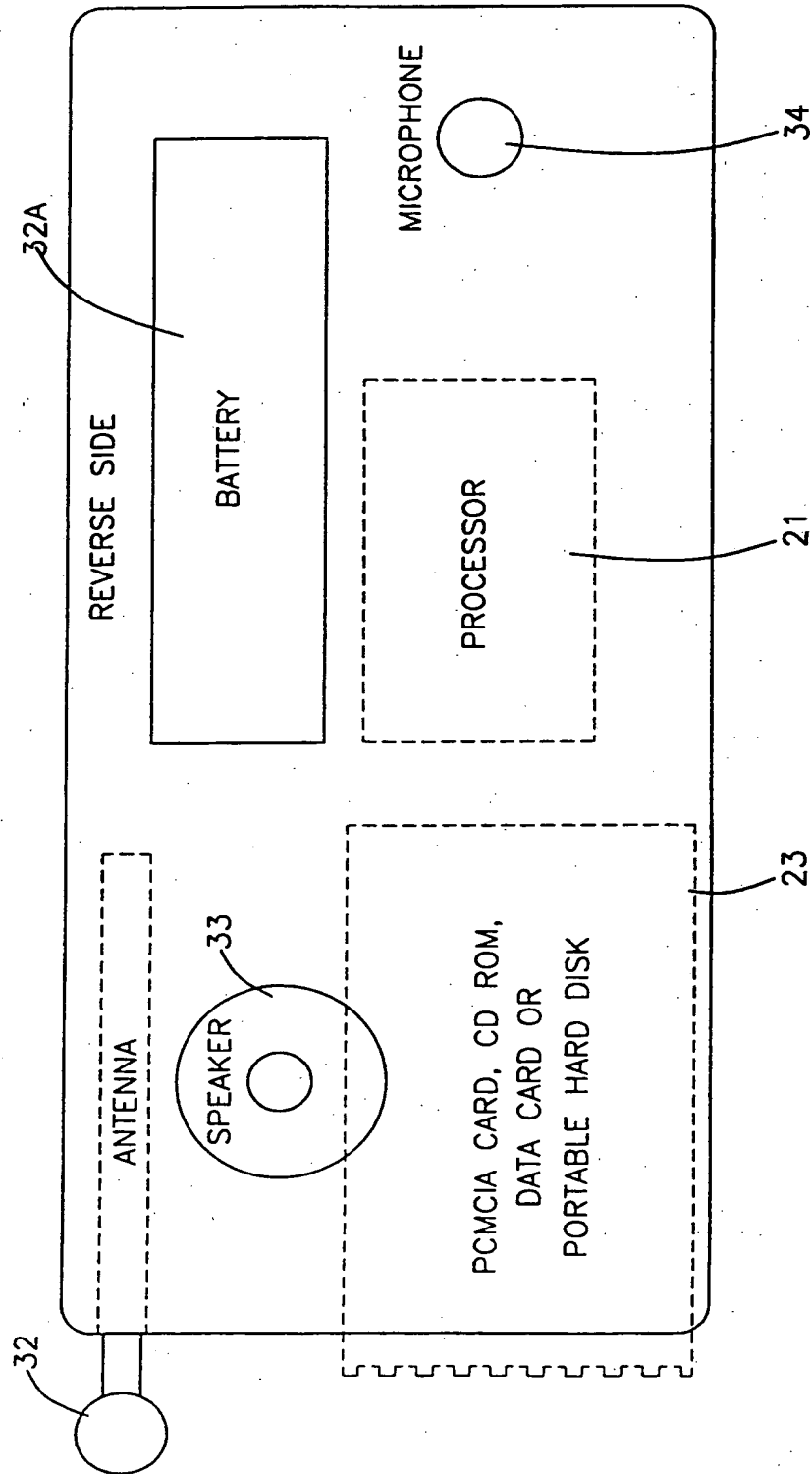


FIG. 4

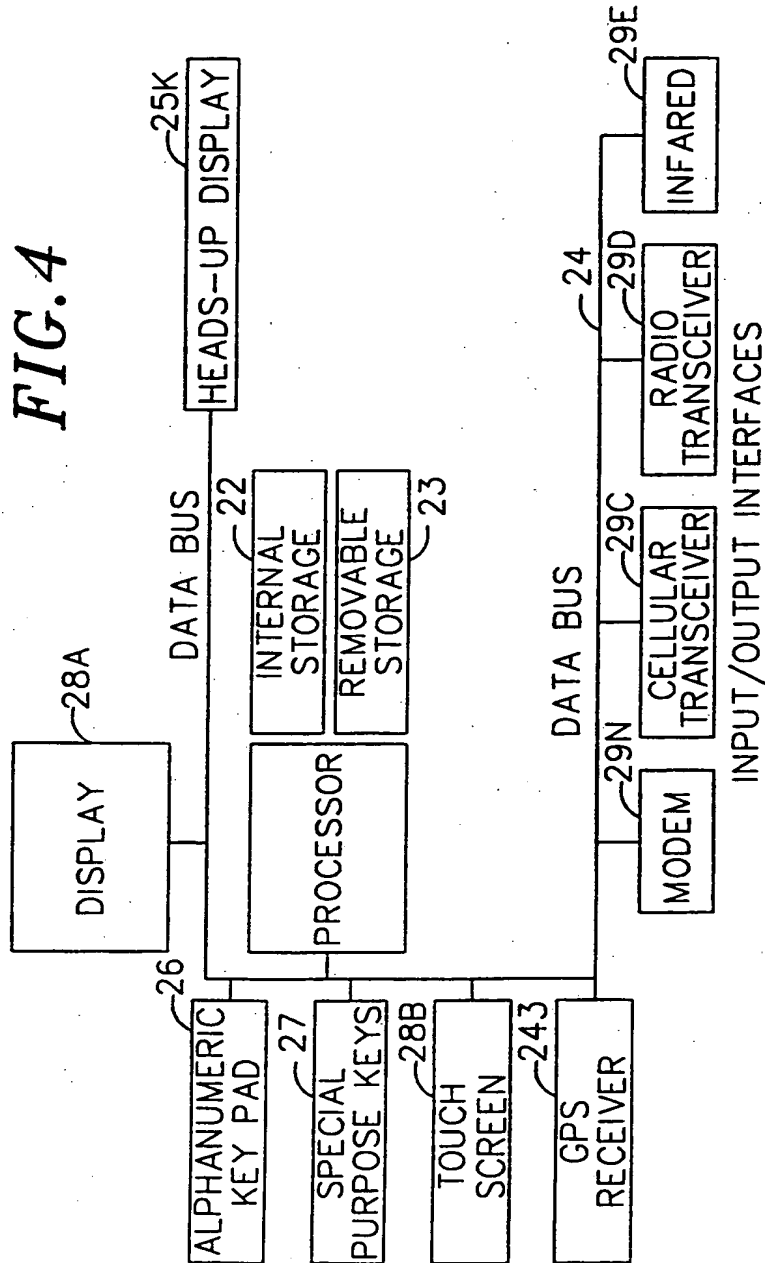


FIG. 4A

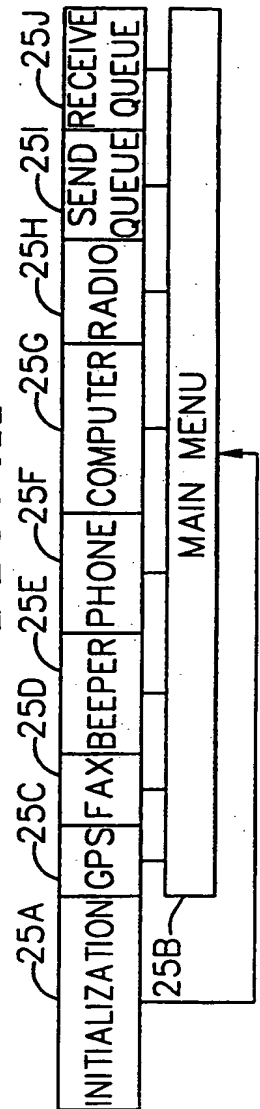
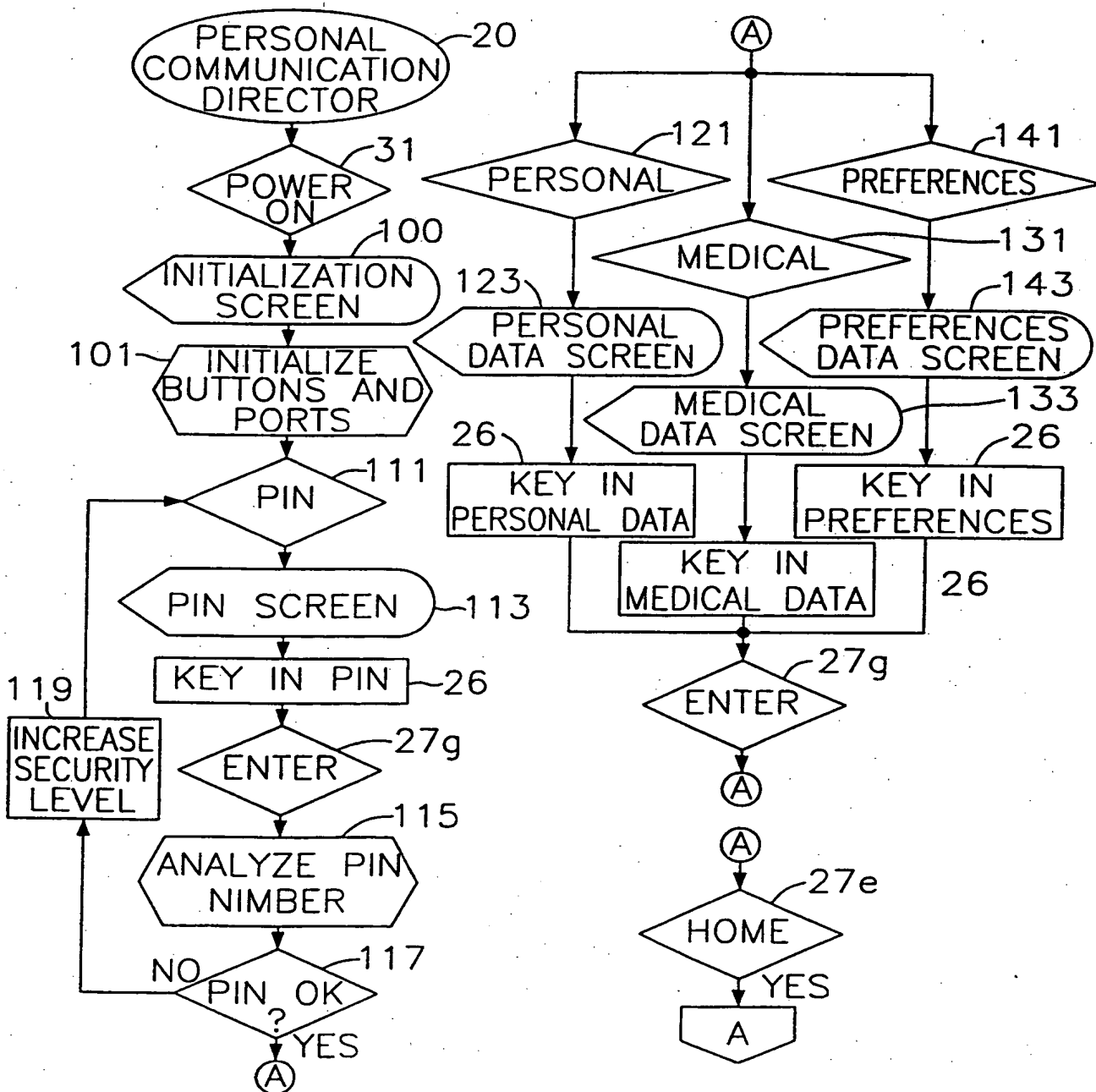
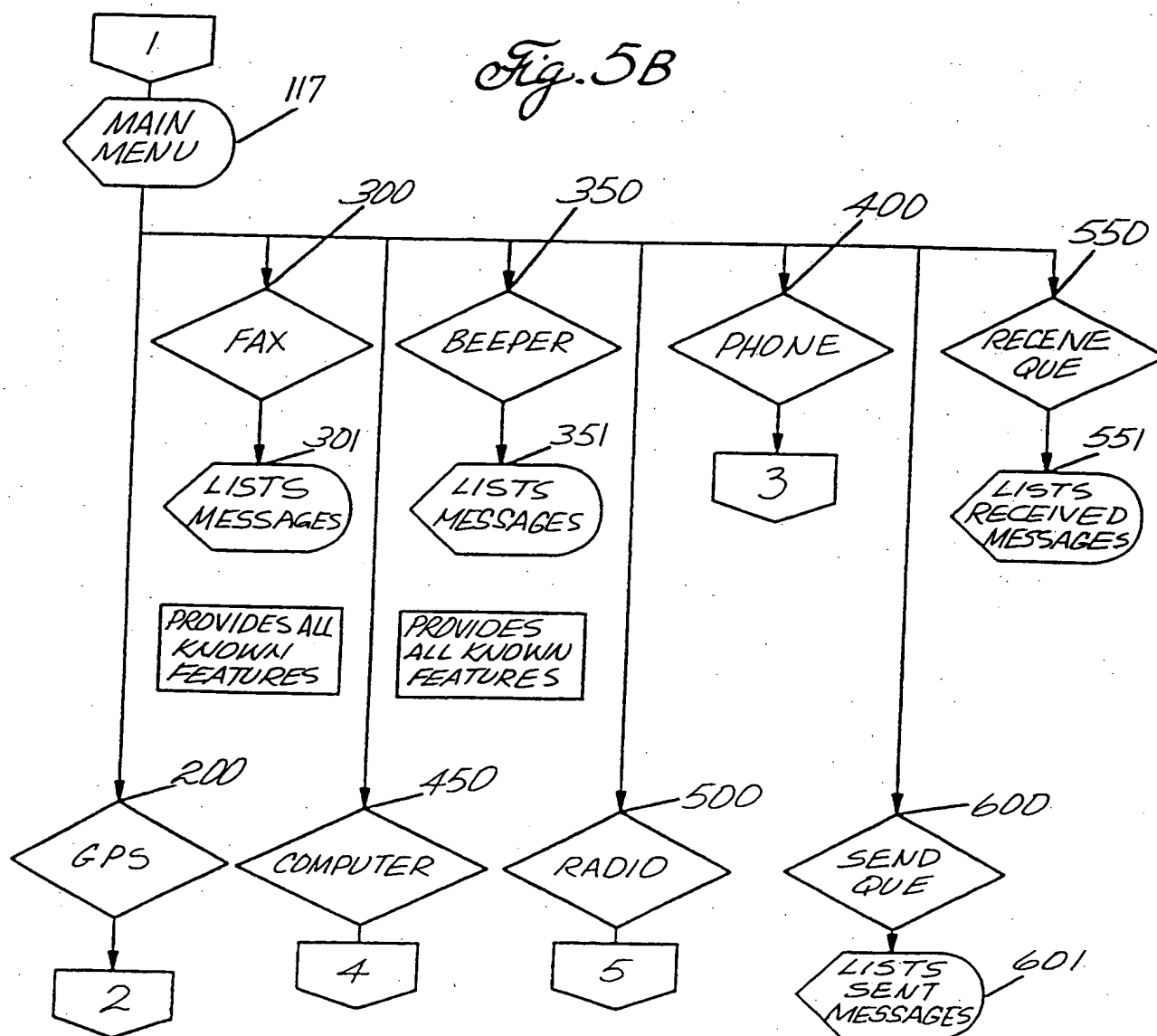


FIG. 5A





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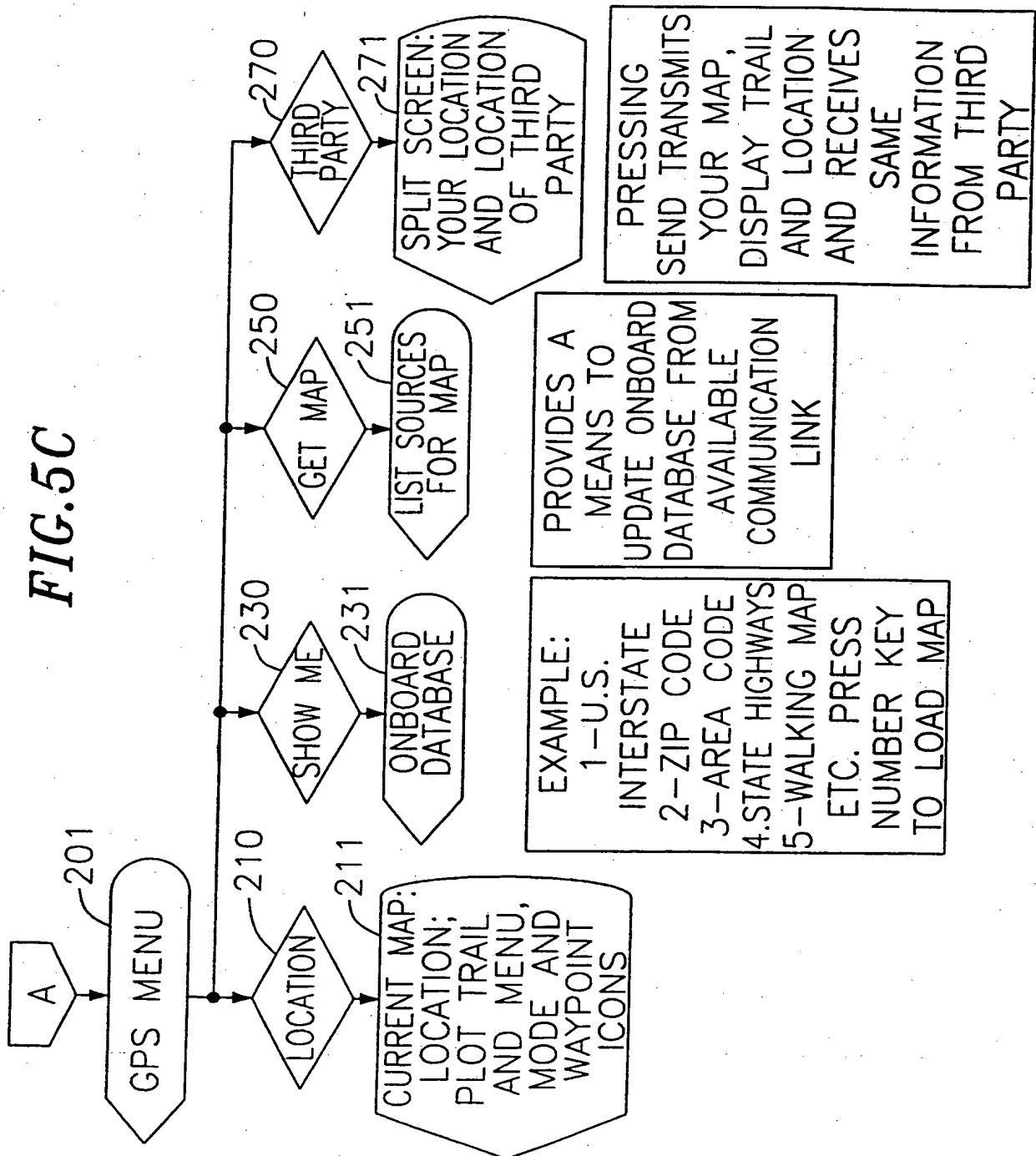
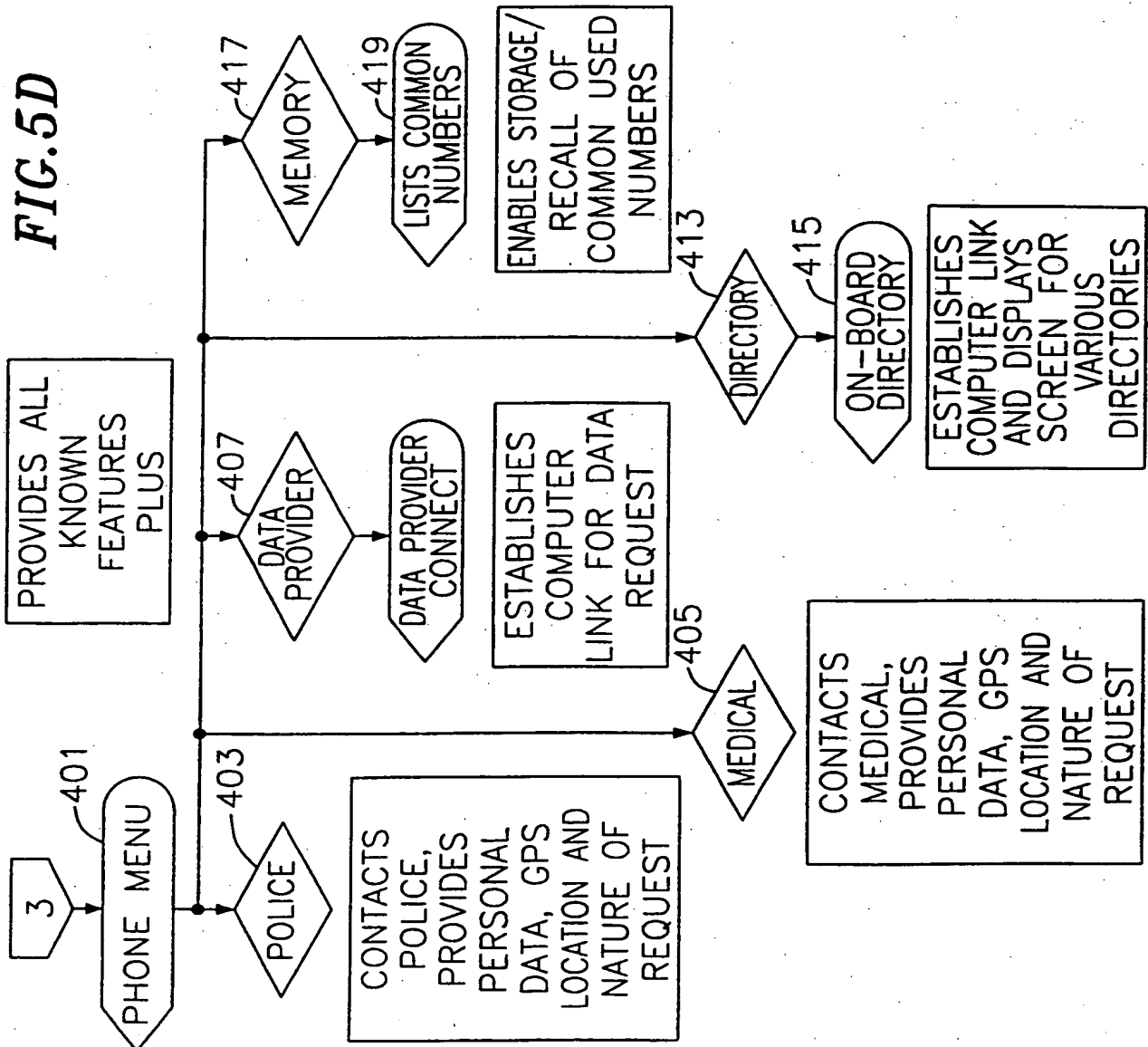
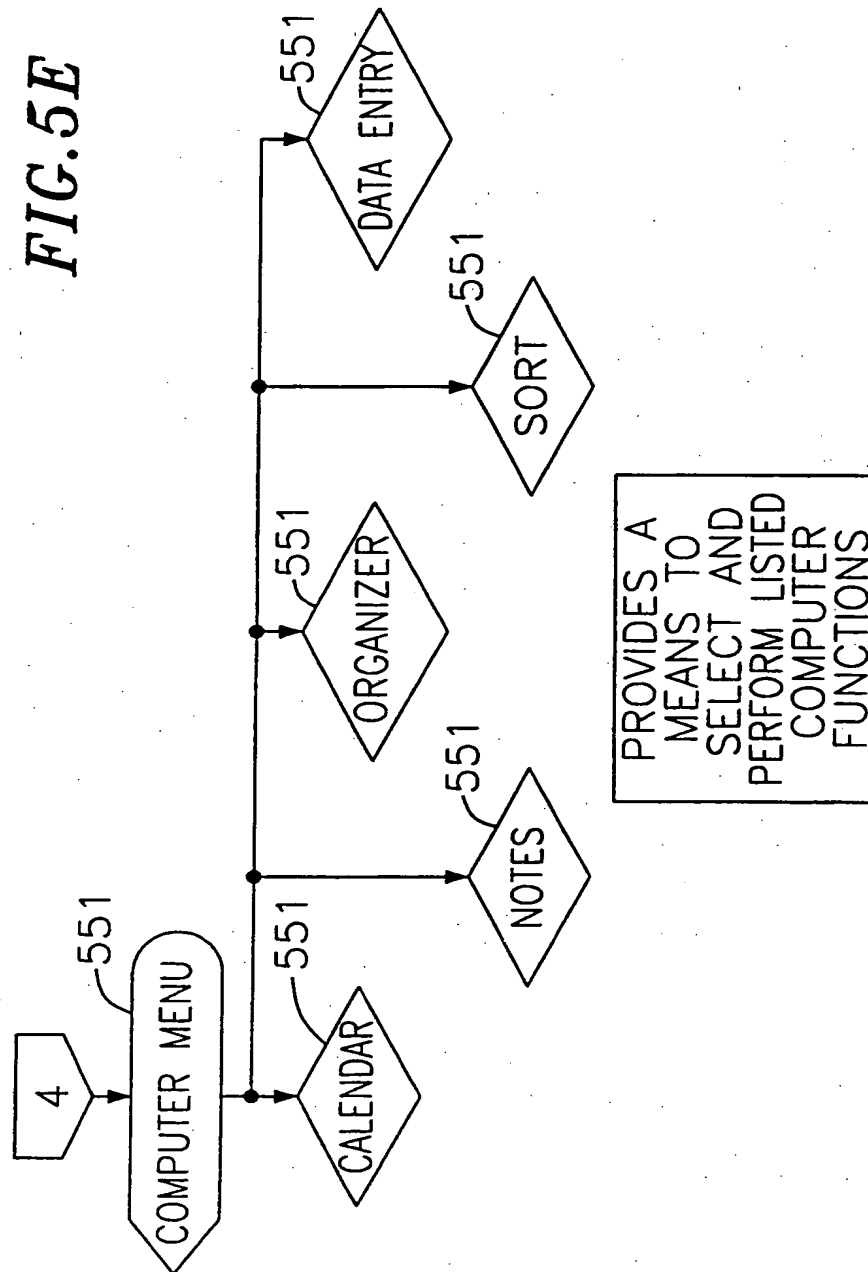


FIG. 5D

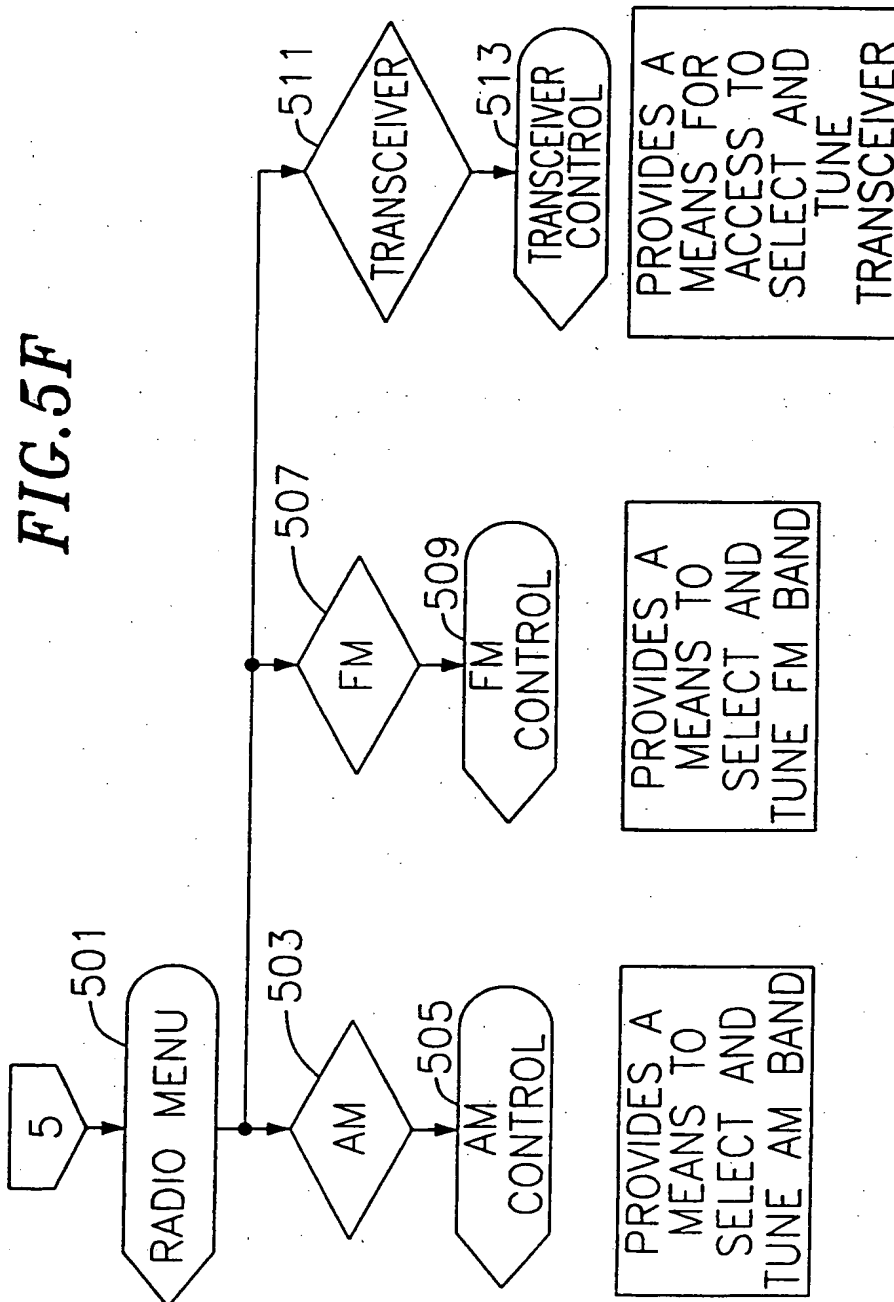


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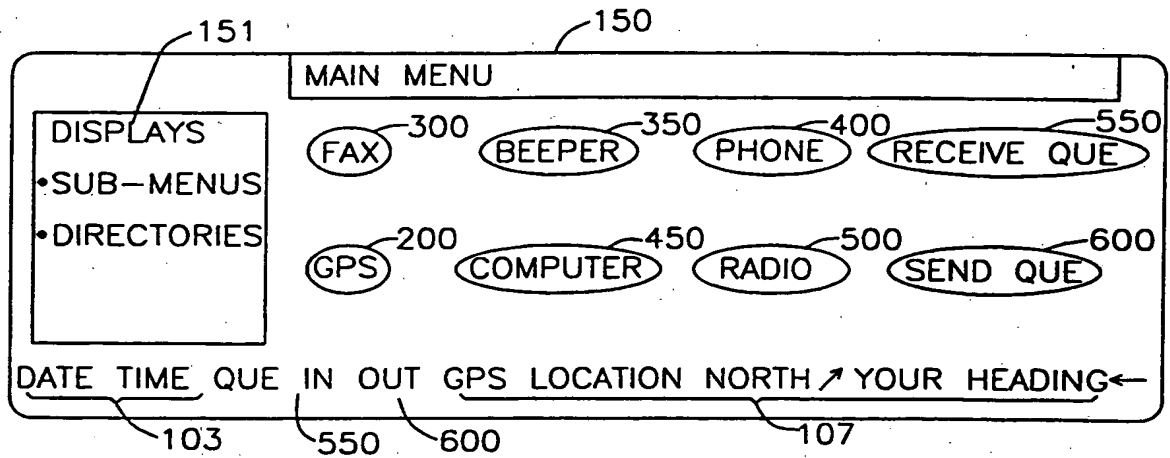
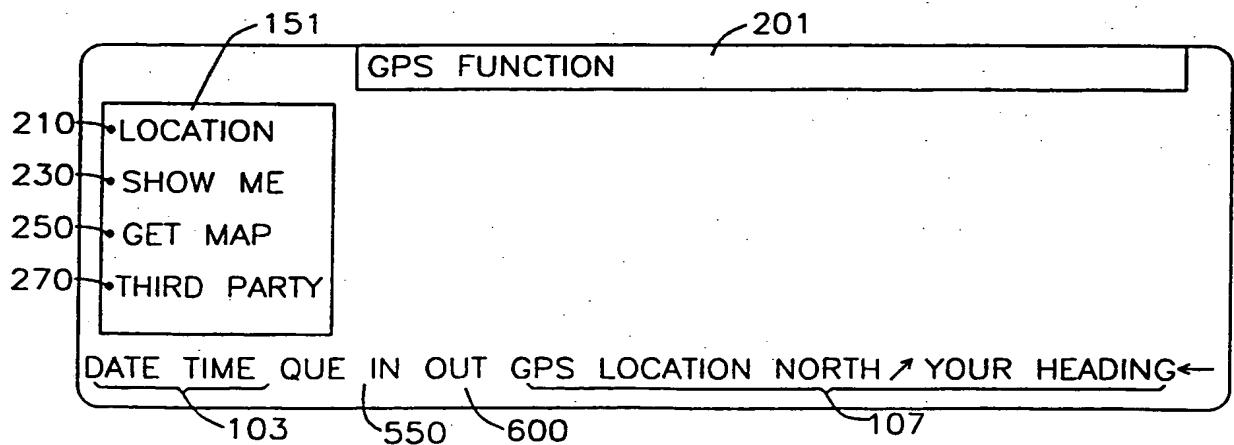
FIG. 5E



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FIG. 6**FIG. 7**

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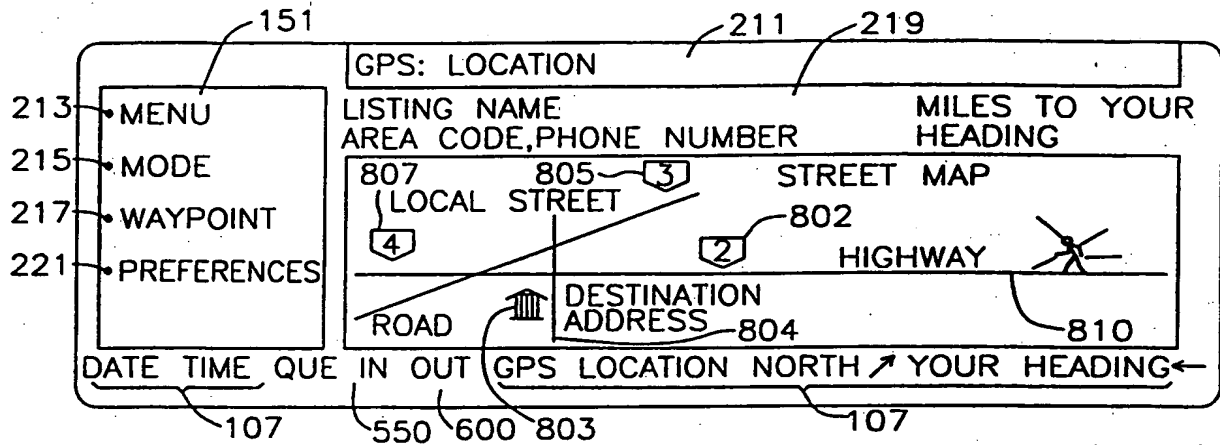
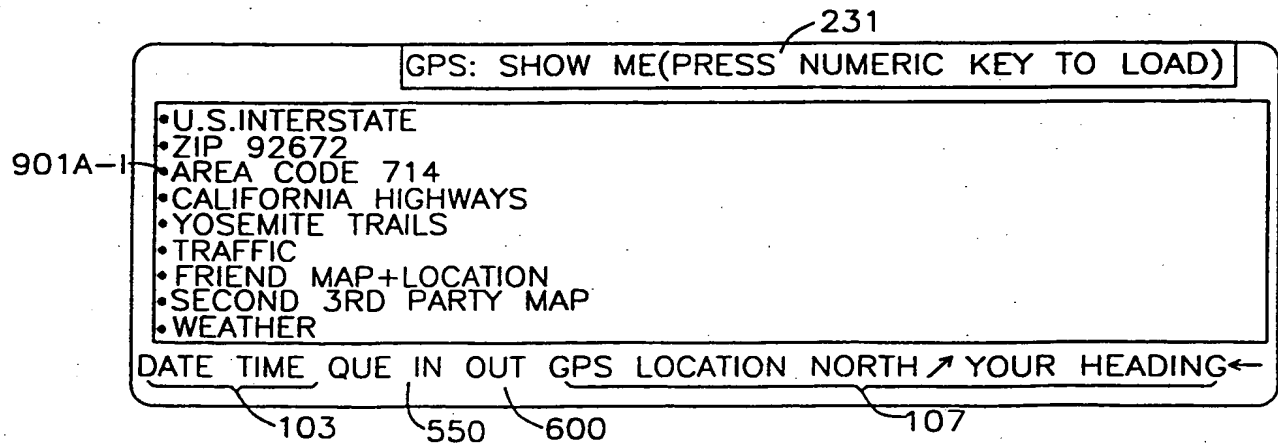
FIG. 8**FIG. 9**

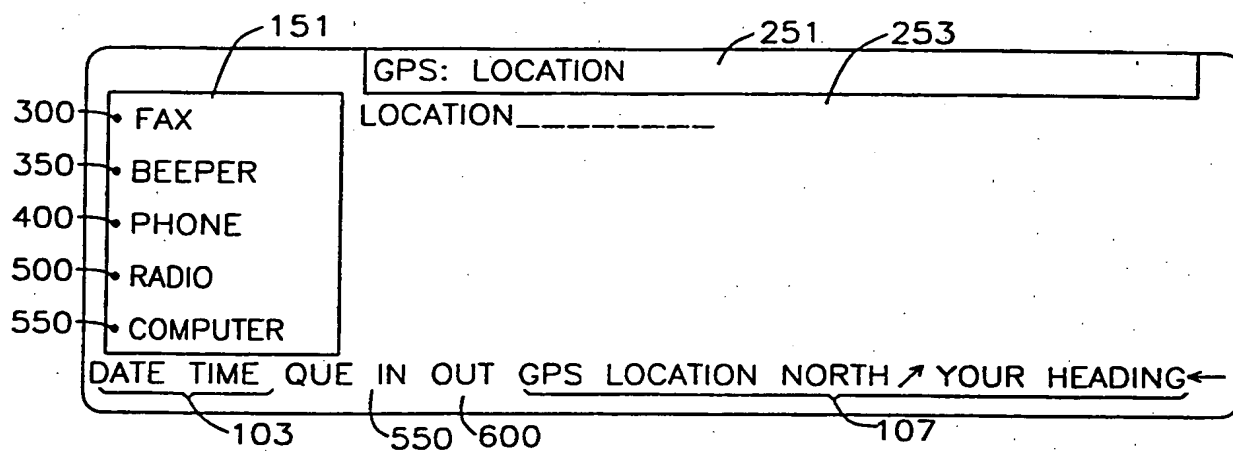
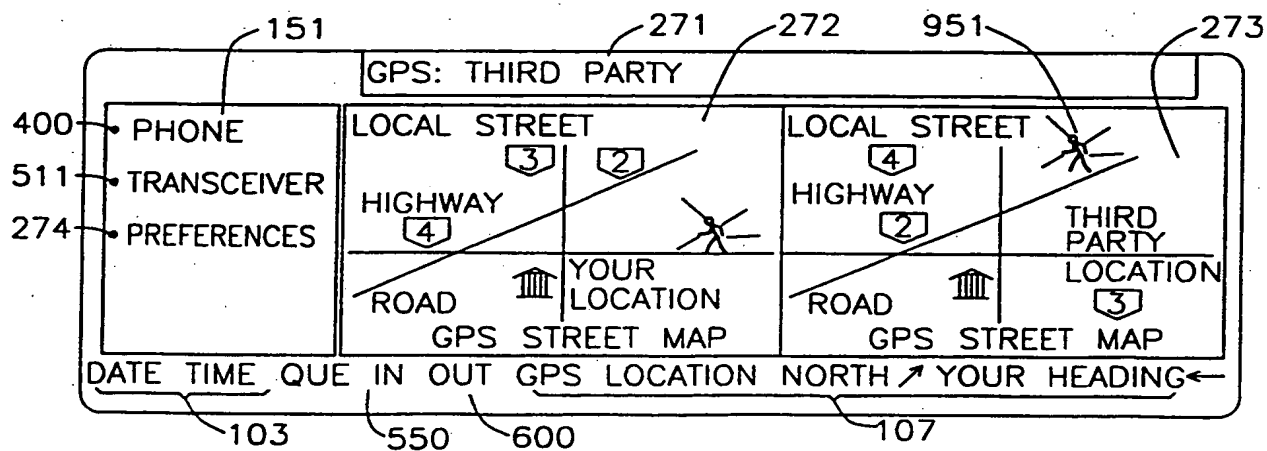
FIG. 10**FIG. 11**

FIG. 12

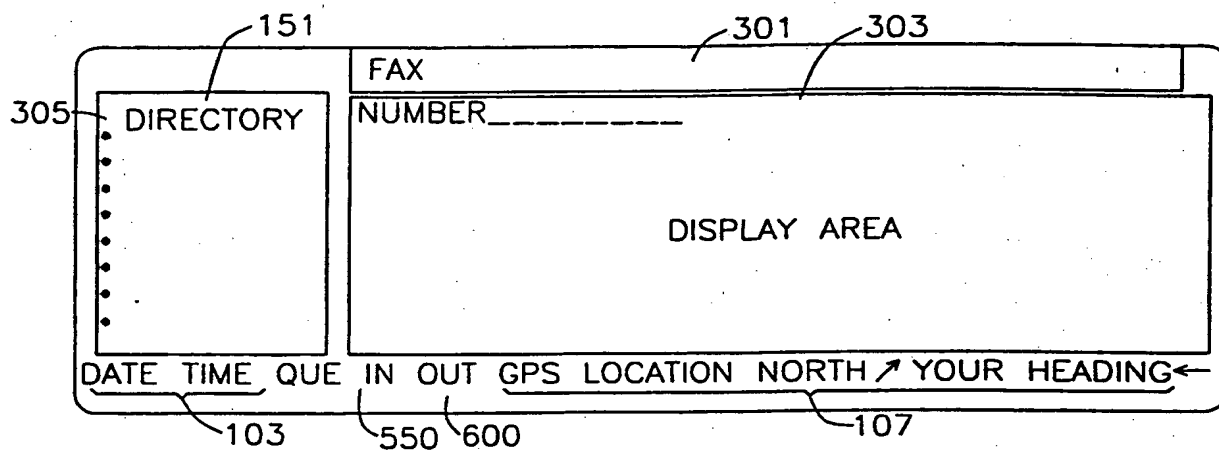
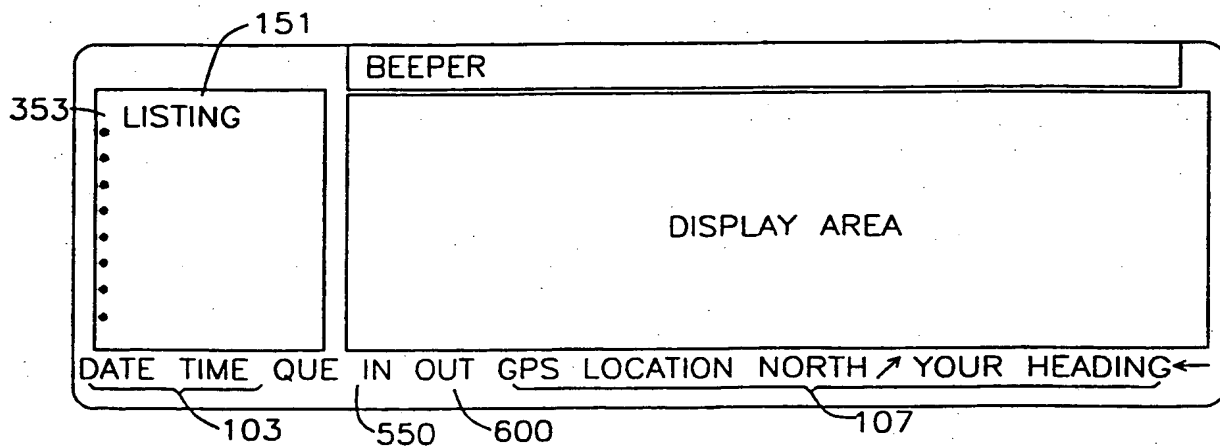


FIG. 13



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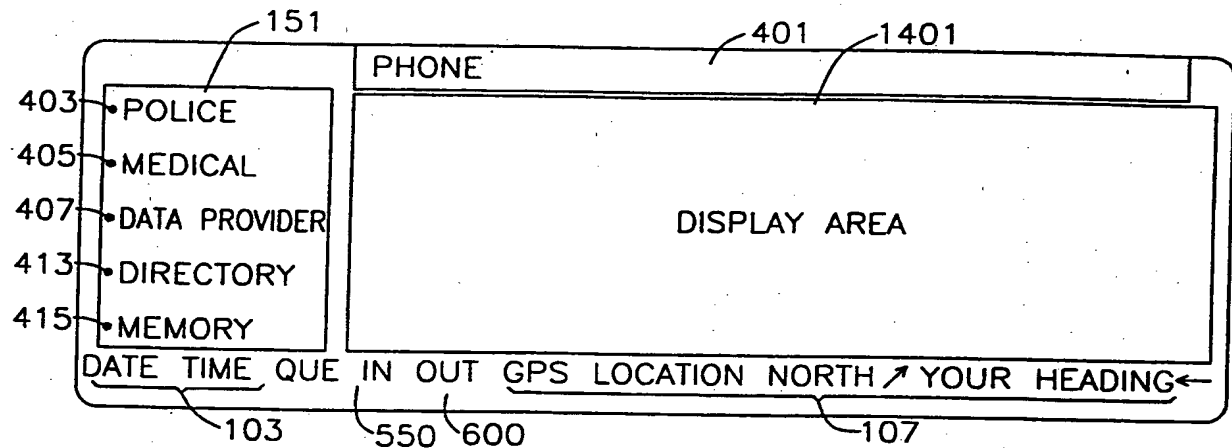
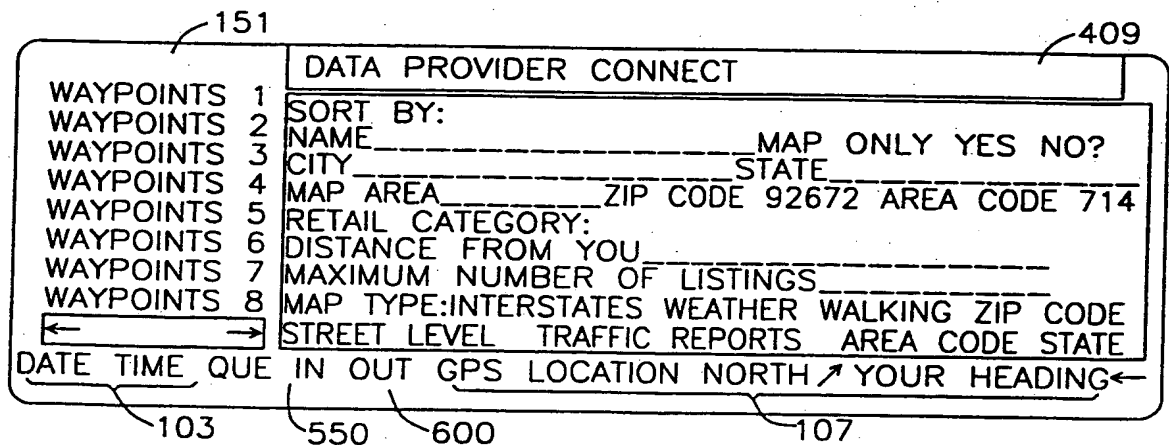
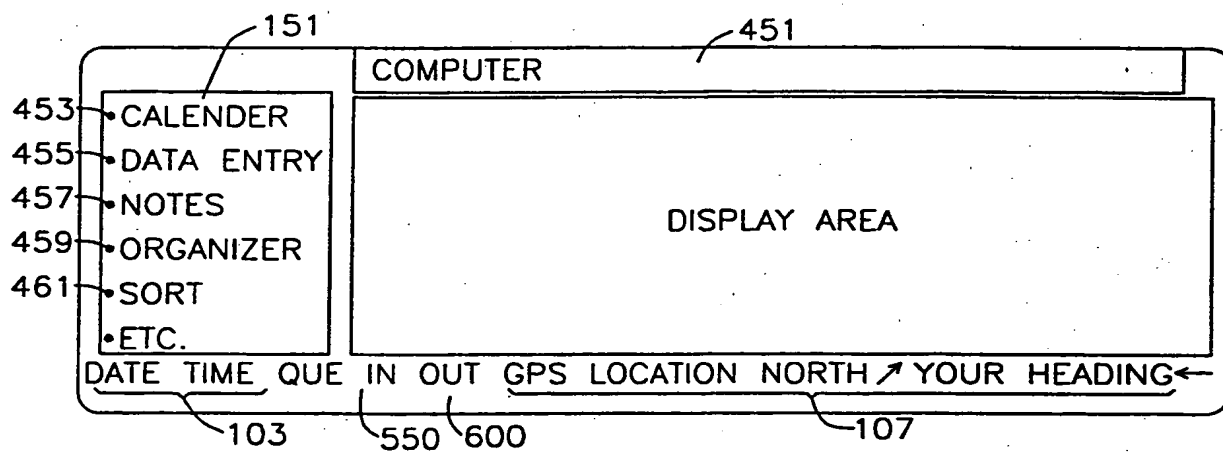
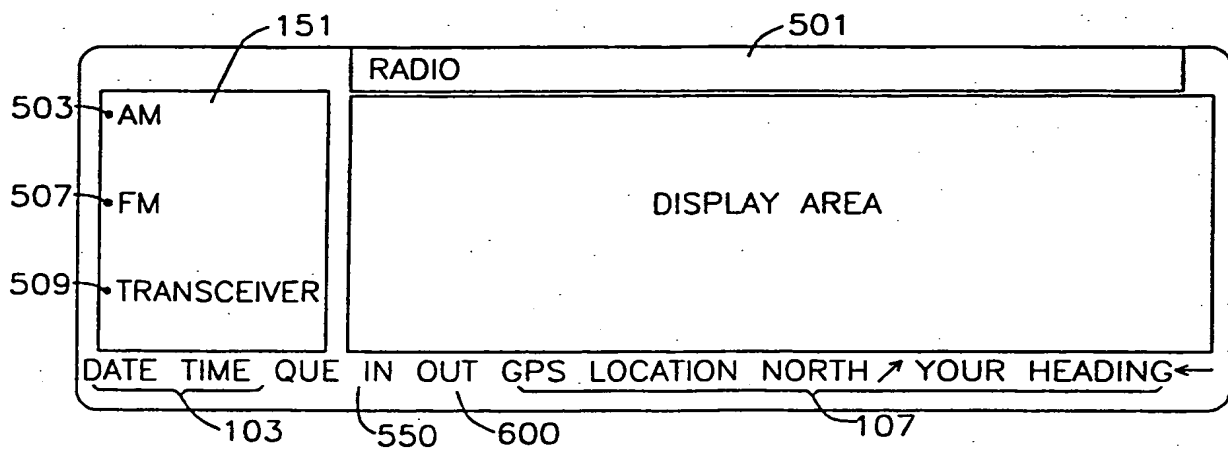
FIG. 14**FIG. 15**

FIG. 16**FIG. 17**

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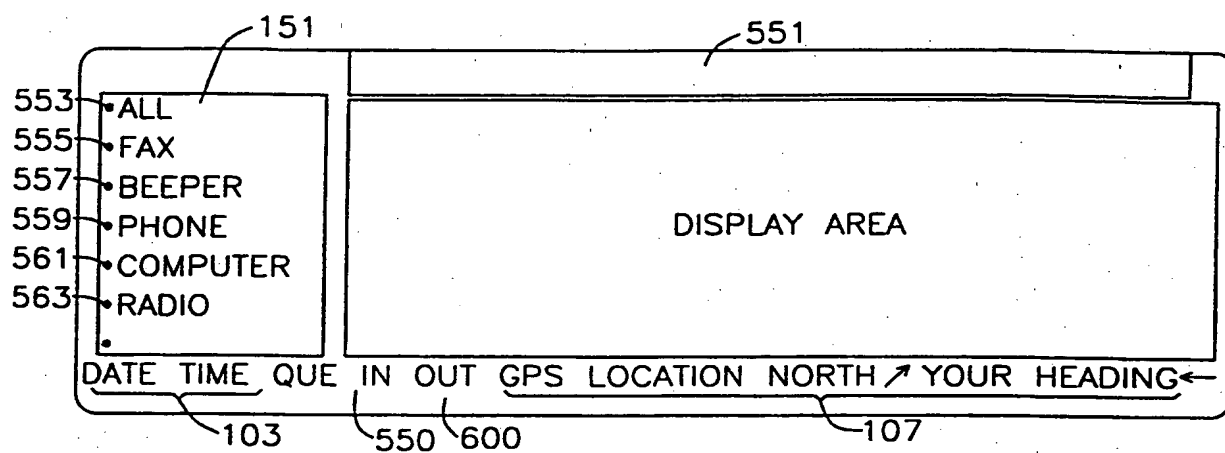
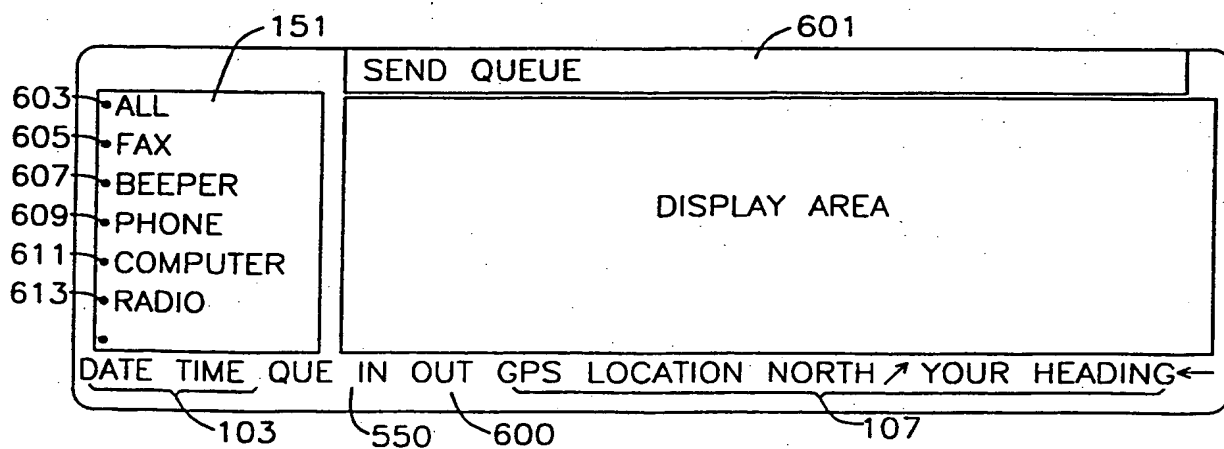
FIG. 18**FIG. 19**

FIG. 20

LISTING / NAME / WAYPOINT	ADDRESS	CITY	STATE	PHONE NO	GPS LOCATION NORTH	GPS WEST	WAYPOINT
ALEX'S GERMAN-AMERICAN RESTAURANT	2801 S. EL CAMINO REAL	SAN CLEMENTE	CA	714-492-8986	33°24.60	117°36.25	1
ANTOINE'S CAFE	218 S. EL CAMINO REAL	SAN CLEMENTE	CA	714-492-1763	33°25.40	117°37.38	2
BAKERS'S SQUARE RESTAURANT & PIES	610 CAMINO DE LOS MARES	SAN CLEMENTE	CA	714-661-3100	33°27.80	117°39.60	3
BEACH GARDEN CAFE	618 1/2 AVENIDA VICTORIA	SAN CLEMENTE	CA	714-498-8145	33°25.35	117°37.36	4
BOOTLEGGERS GRILL & SPEAKEASY	111 AVE. PALIZADA	SAN CLEMENTE	CA	714-361-8658	33°25.65	117°37.85	5
BURBON STREET SANDWICHERY	430 N. EL CAMINO REAL	SAN CLEMENTE	CA	714-492-7827	33°25.58	117°37.76	6
BURGER STOP	524 AVENIDA PICO	SAN CLEMENTE	CA	714-492-2350	33°25.92	117°37.12	7
BURRITO BASKET, THE	2017 S. EL CAMINO REAL	SAN CLEMENTE	CA	714-498-5002	33°25.10	117°36.34	8
CAFE CALYPSO	114 AVENIDA DEL MAR	SAN CLEMENTE	CA	714-366-9346	33°25.42	117°37.42	9
CAFE EXPRESSO	641 CAMINO DE LOS MARES	SAN CLEMENTE	CA	714-240-3467	33°25.81	117°37.31	10
CAPTAIN CULVER COUNTERCULTURE NATURAL FOODS	149 AVENIDA DEL MAR	SAN CLEMENTE	CA	714-498-8098	33°25.39	117°37.40	11
CARL'S JR. RESTAURANT	638 CAMINO DE LOS MARES	SAN CLEMENTE	CA	714-493-0189	33°27.65	117°39.45	12
CARL'S JR. RESTAURANT	3929 S. EL CAMINO REAL	SAN CLEMENTE	CA	714-498-5641	33°24.50	117°35.95	13
CARROWS RESTAURANT	620 AVENIDA PICO	SAN CLEMENTE	CA	714-492-4290	33°25.85	117°37.10	14
CHINA BEACH CANTEEN	2369 S. EL CAMINO REAL	SAN CLEMENTE	CA	714-492-6228	33°27.80	117°37.15	15
CHINA WELL RESTAURANT	620 CAMINO DE LOS MARES	SAN CLEMENTE	CA	714-661-6813	33°27.61	117°39.42	16
COCO'S FAMILY RESTAURANT	2350 S. EL CAMINO REAL	SAN CLEMENTE	CA	714-498-1542	33°24.90	117°36.18	17
CORKY'S CAFE	2727 VIA CASCADITA	SAN CLEMENTE	CA	714-492-1135	33°25.10	117°37.48	18
COURTSIDE RESTAURANT	111 AVE. VISTA MONTANA	SAN CLEMENTE	CA	714-361-2211	33°25.10	117°36.10	19
DAVE'S MEXICAN RESTAURANT	1701 N. EL CAMINO REAL	SAN CLEMENTE	CA	714-492-7867	33°25.50	117°38.90	20
DEL TACO	109 CALLE DE INDUSTRIAS	SAN CLEMENTE	CA	714-492-5311	33°25.51	117°36.50	21
DENNY'S RESTAURANT	529 AVENIDA PICO	SAN CLEMENTE	CA	714-492-2362	33°25.48	117°36.15	22
DOMINOES PIZZA	1502 N. EL CAMINO REAL	SAN CLEMENTE	CA	714-498-9002	33°25.25	117°37.50	23
EASTERN WINDS	201 N. EL CAMINO REAL	SAN CLEMENTE	CA	714-492-3008	33°25.01	117°37.05	24
EL CAMINO TACOS	420 S. EL CAMINO REAL	SAN CLEMENTE	CA	714-366-8358	33°25.10	117°37.25	25
EL JEFE CAFE	106 E. ESCALONES	SAN CLEMENTE	CA	714-492-4010	33°25.25	117°37.03	26
EL MIRADOR	301 N. EL CAMINO REAL	SAN CLEMENTE	CA	714-366-0855	33°25.08	117°37.10	27

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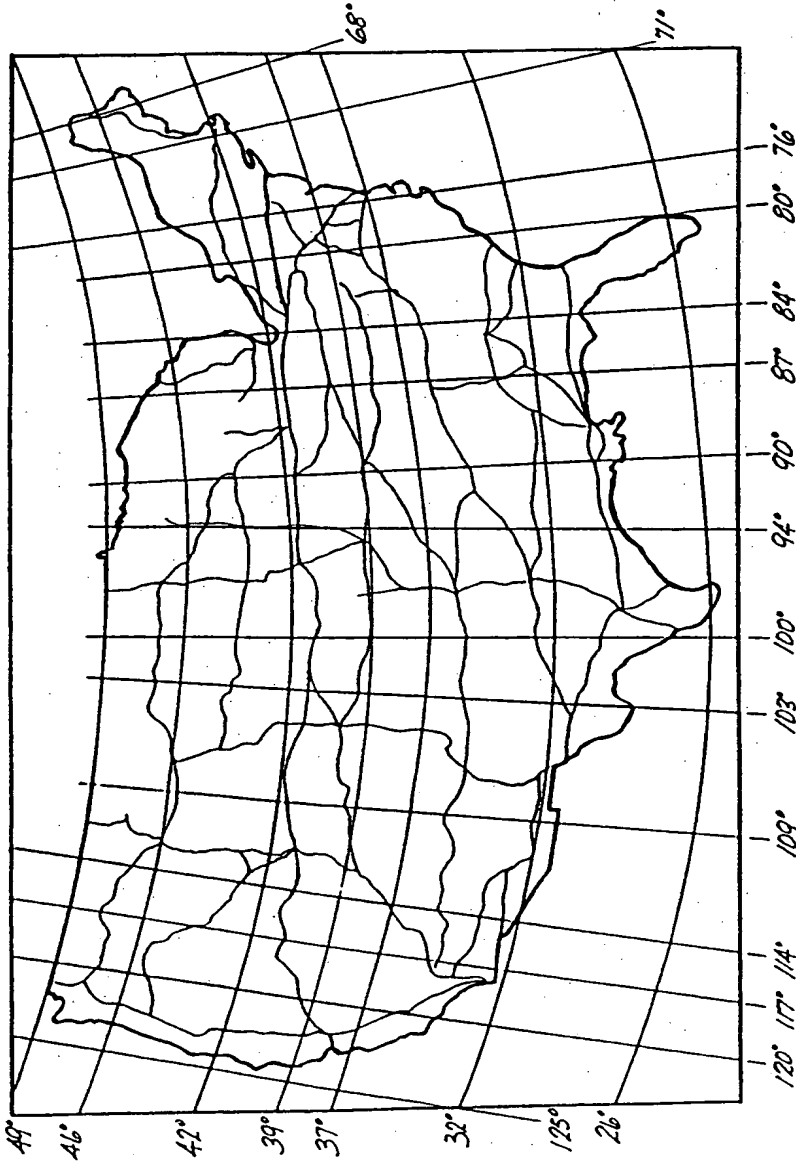


Fig. 21

- 1115 LONGITUDE AND LATITUDE COORDINATES.
- AREA CODE BOUNDARIES.
 - ZIP CODE BOUNDARIES.
 - NATIONAL PARK BOUNDARIES.
 - METRO TRAFFIC ZONES.
 - INTERSTATE BOUNDARIES.
 - US HIGHWAY BOUNDARIES.
 - STATE ROUTE BOUNDARIES.
 - CITY/COUNTY/STATE PROVINCE BOUNDARIES.
 - POLITICAL BOUNDARIES.
 - ECONOMIC, RETAIL, BUSINESS ZONE BOUNDARIES.

GPS ENCODED EMBODIMENTS ARE NOT LIMITED TO THE ABOVE EXAMPLES AND MAY INCLUDE MANY OTHER SYSTEMS USING VARIOUS RECORDING TECHNIQUES.

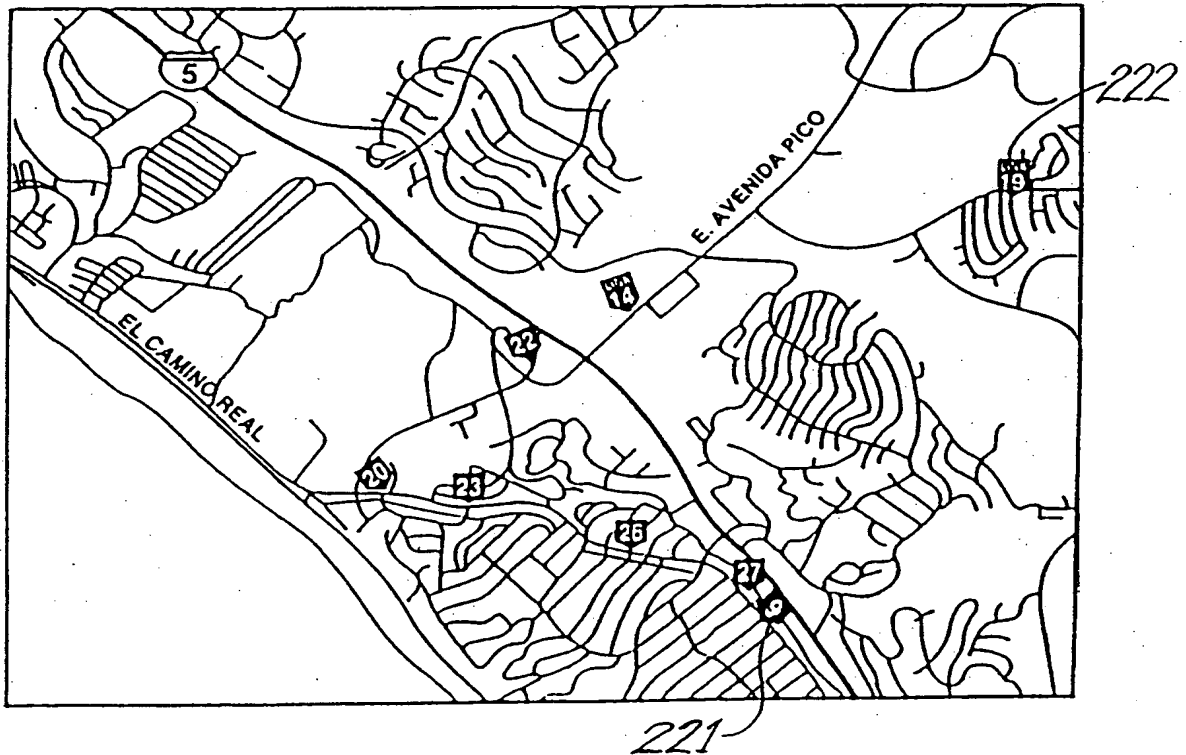


Fig. 22

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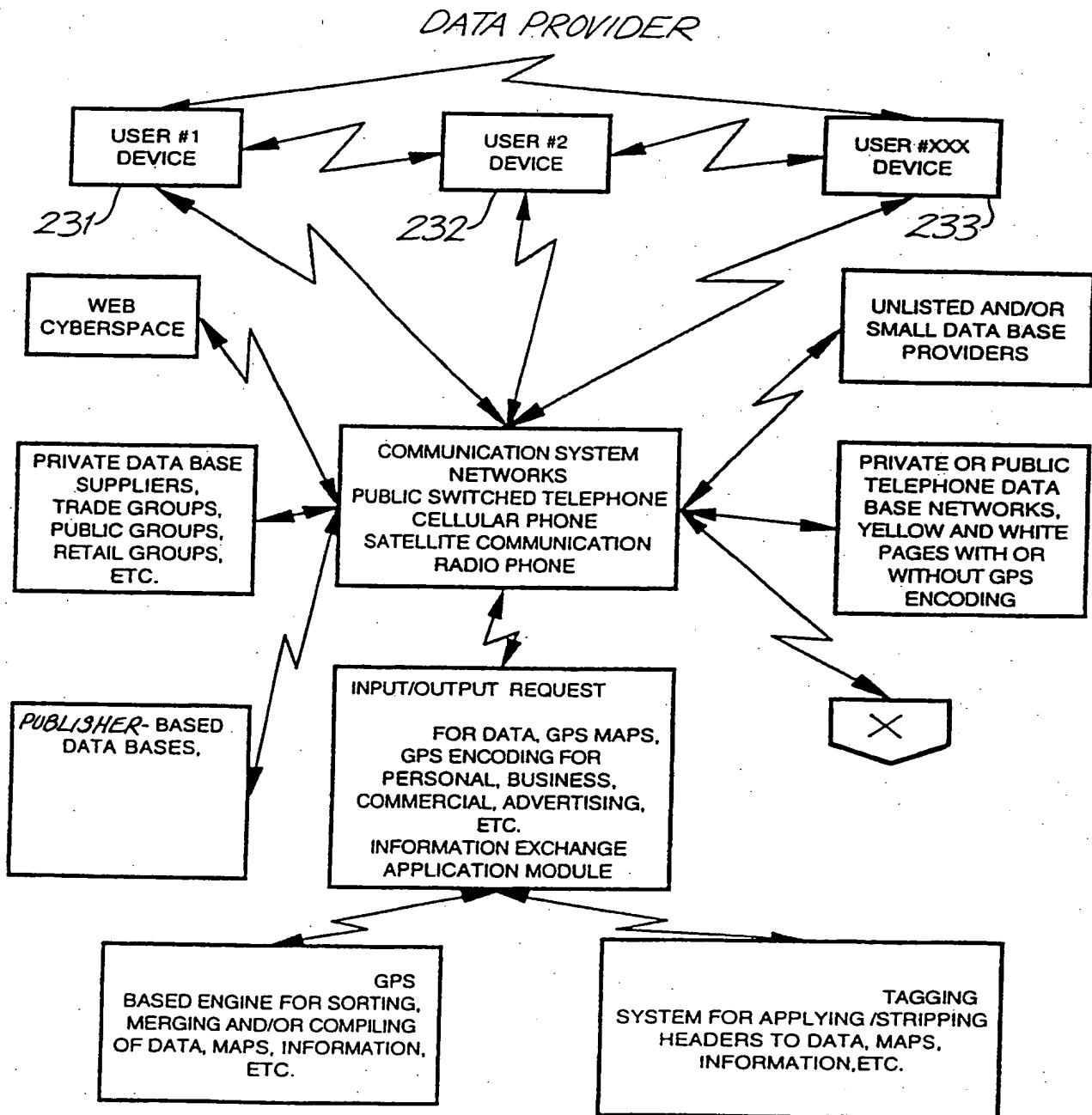
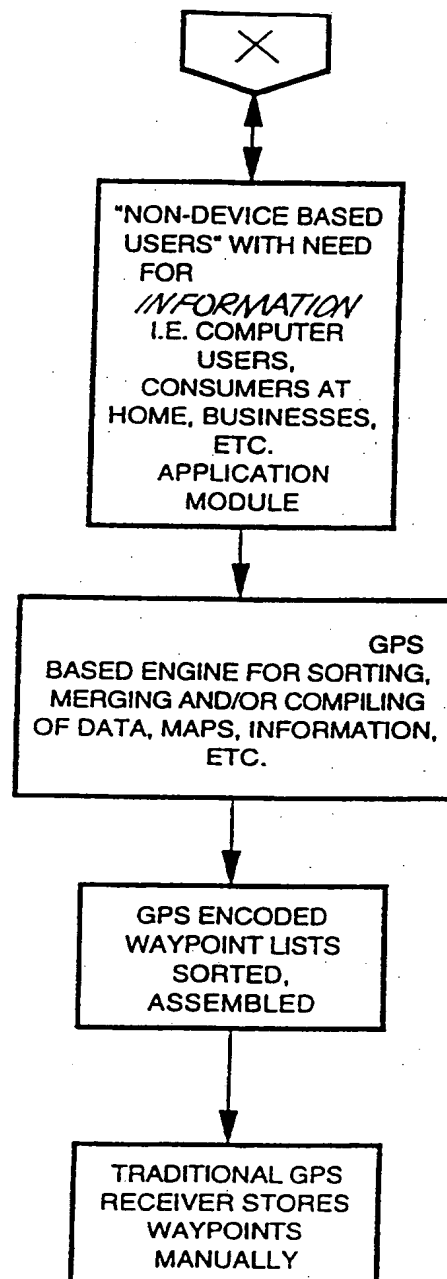


Fig. 23A

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**Fig. 23B**

REQUESTER

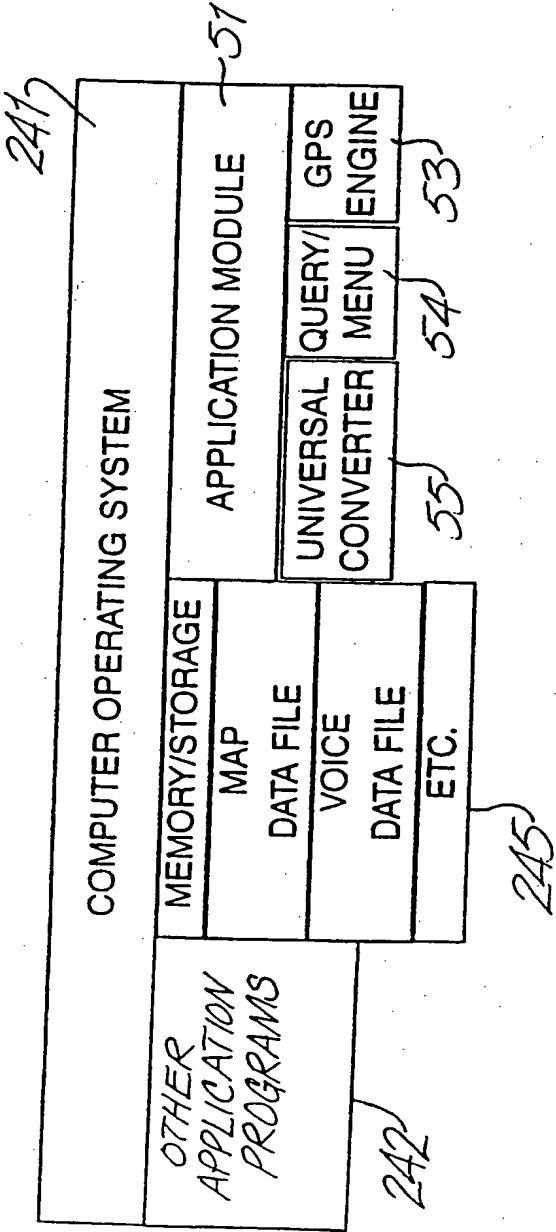


Fig. 24

PROVIDER

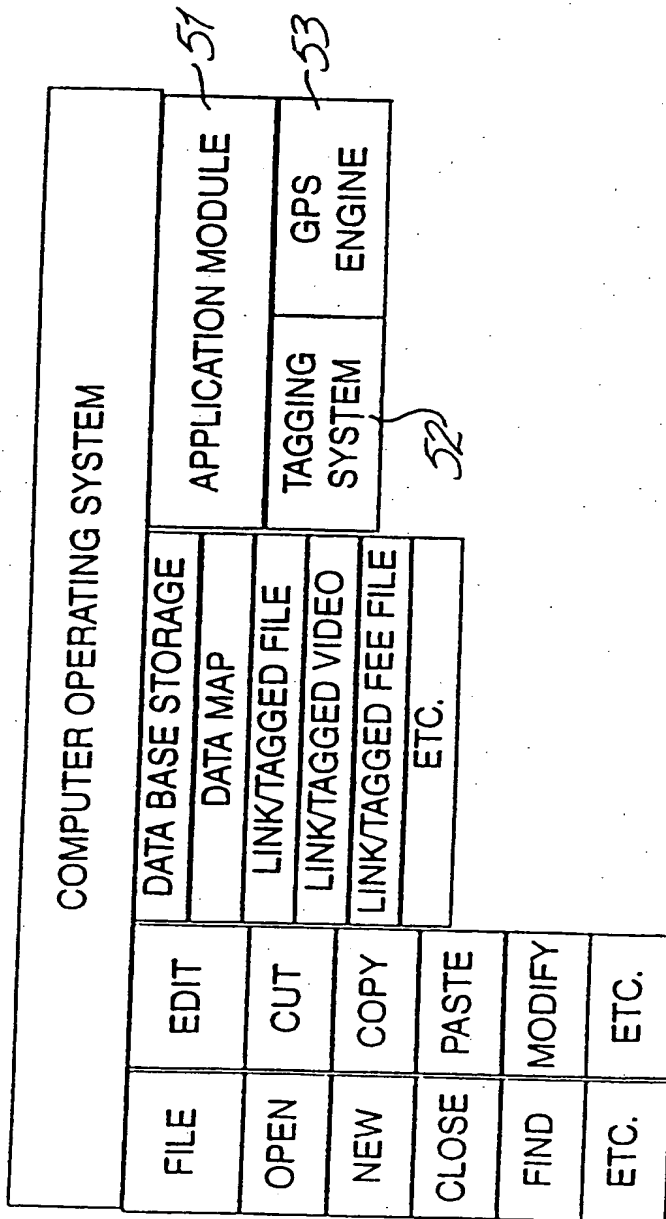


Fig. 25

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APPLICATION MODULE

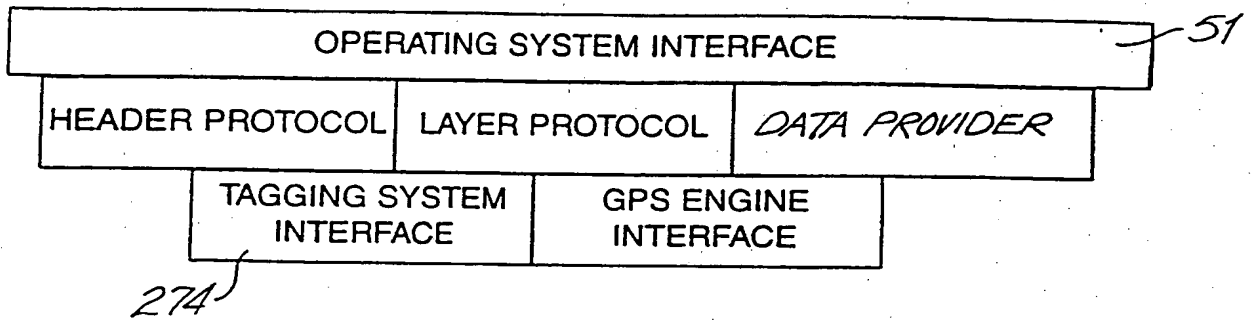


Fig. 26

TAGGING SYSTEM

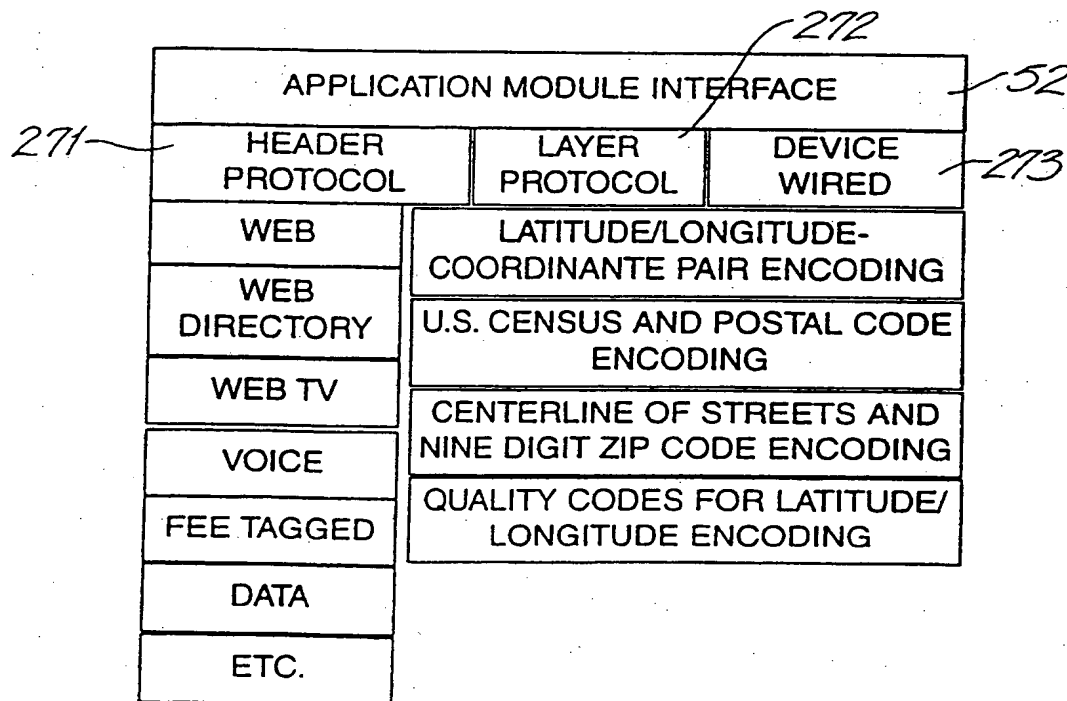


Fig. 27

GPS ENGINE

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APPLICATION MODULE INTERFACE			
HEADER PROTOCOL	LAYER SYSTEM	ACCESS LATITUDE/LONGITUDE QUALITY CODES FOR BEST DISPLAY SCALES	
TAG TYPE	LAYER PROTOCOL	USE SPATIAL QUERY FUNCTIONS	
LATITUDE/ LONGITUDE	ROUTE PLANNING	USE CENTROID INTERPOLATION FUNCTIONS	
RADIUS		USE MATCH-RATE COMPARISON FUNCTIONS	
MAP			
WAYPOINT LINKS			
ETC.			

Fig. 28

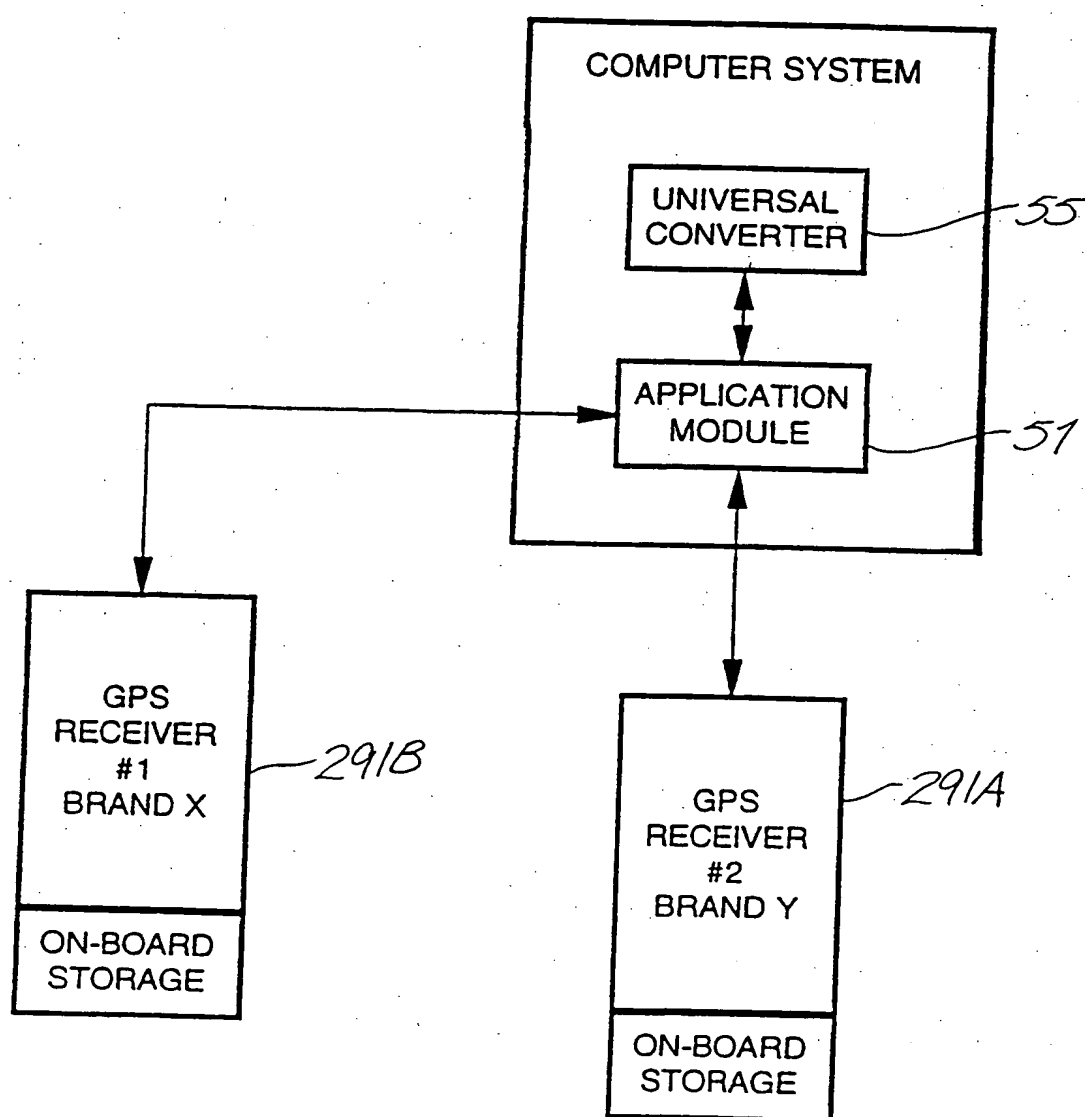
UNIVERSAL
TRANSLATOR

Fig. 29

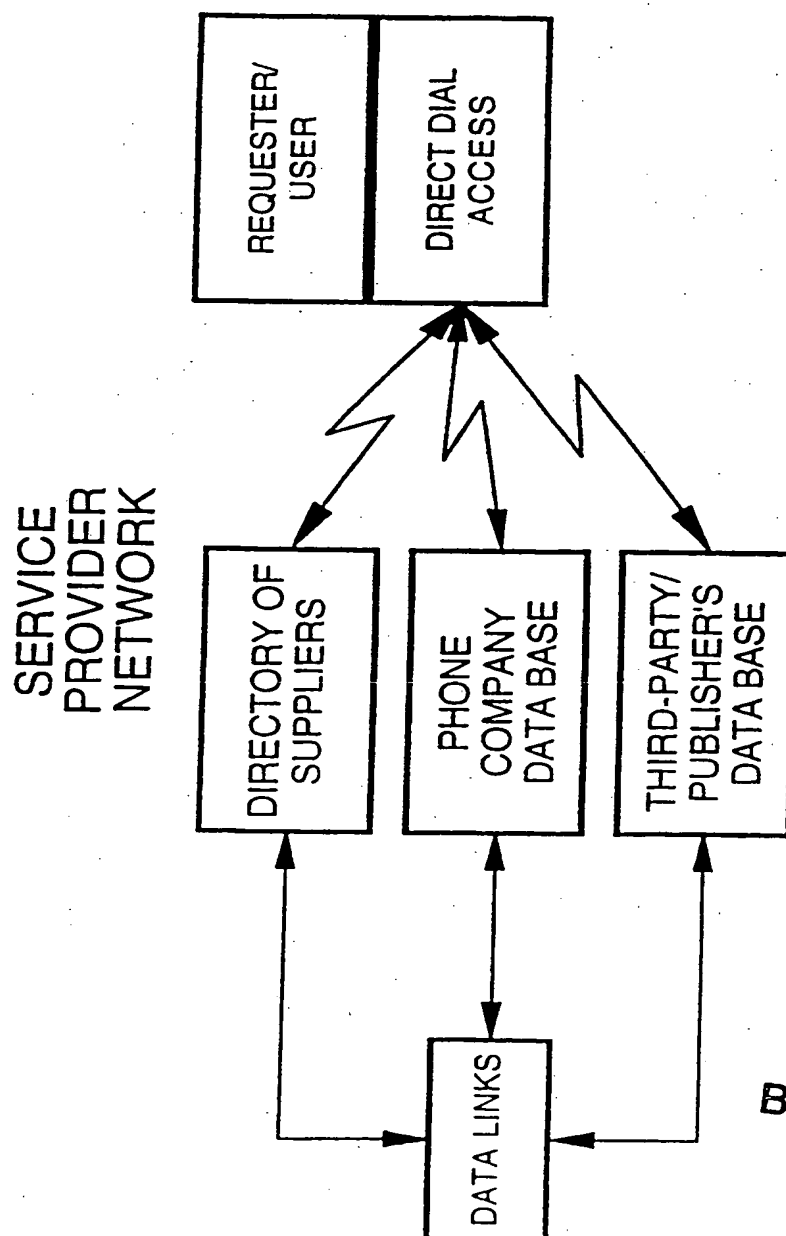


Fig. 30

BEST AVAILABLE COPY

DIGITAL WEB TV

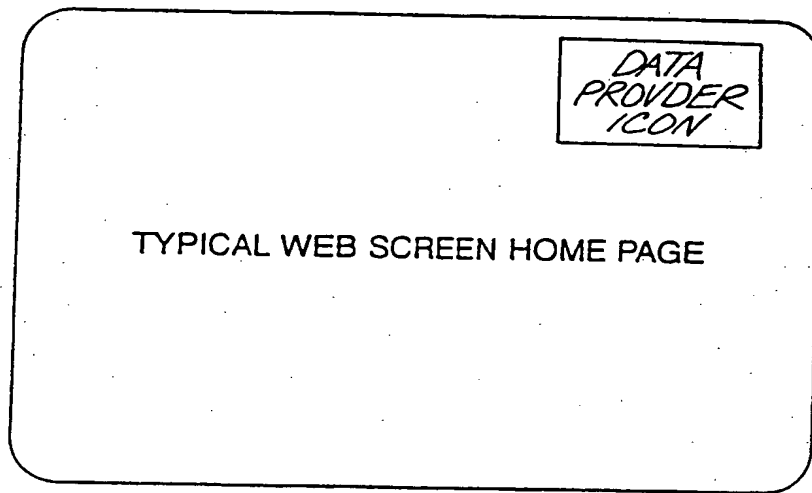


Fig. 31

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FIG.32

321A-M

US SATELLITE RADAR CURRENT DELTA RADAR LOCAL RADAR SURFACE MAPS WIND CHILL CURRENT TEMPS. JET STREAM TRAVEL HAZARDS FORECASTS SURFACE WINDS FARM SHORT RANGE <input type="text"/>	WEATHER MAP PROVIDER (PRESS TO UPDATE) CENTER MAP BY: CITY _____ STATE _____ LAYER MAPS _____ ZIP CODE _____ AREA CODE _____ DISTANCE FROM YOU _____ MILES/KILOMETERS DISTANCE FROM _____ MILES MAP TYPE: (PRESS TO SELECT FROM LIST) UPDATE MAP LIST@ _____ HOUR UPDATE EVERY _____ HOUR, PROMPT Y/N? ANIMATE MAPS Y/N PLAY NAVIGATE MAP Y/N DATE TIME QUE IN OUT GPS LOCATION NORTH ↗ YOUR HEADING ←
--	---

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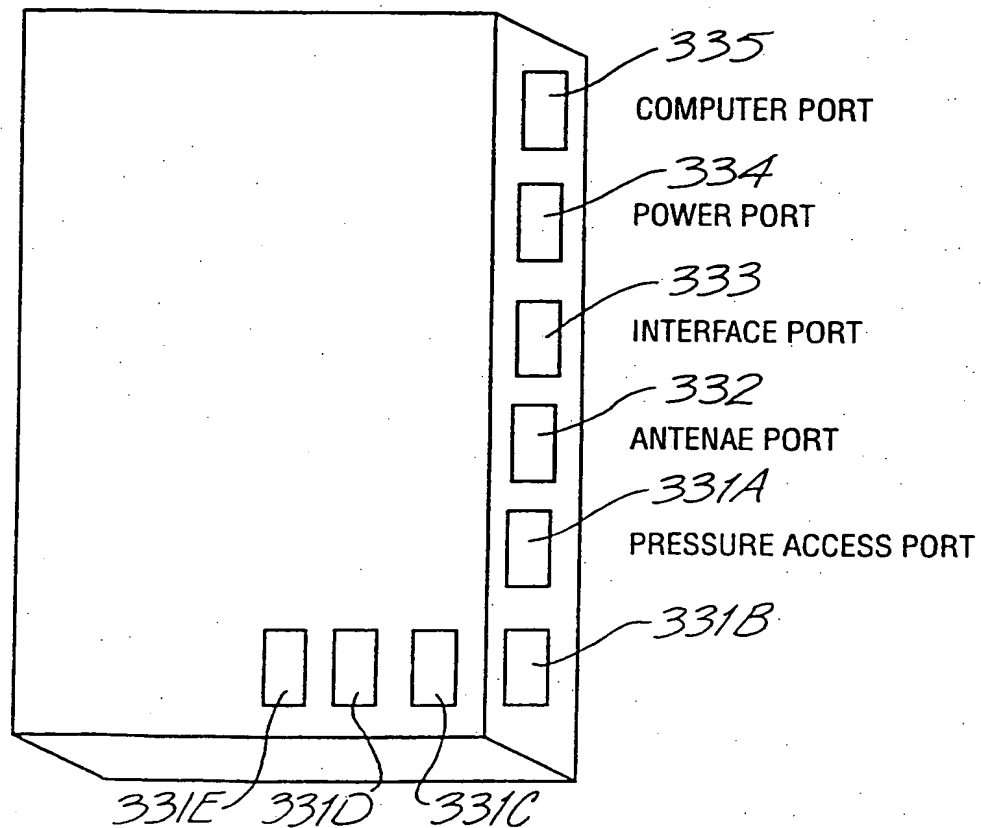
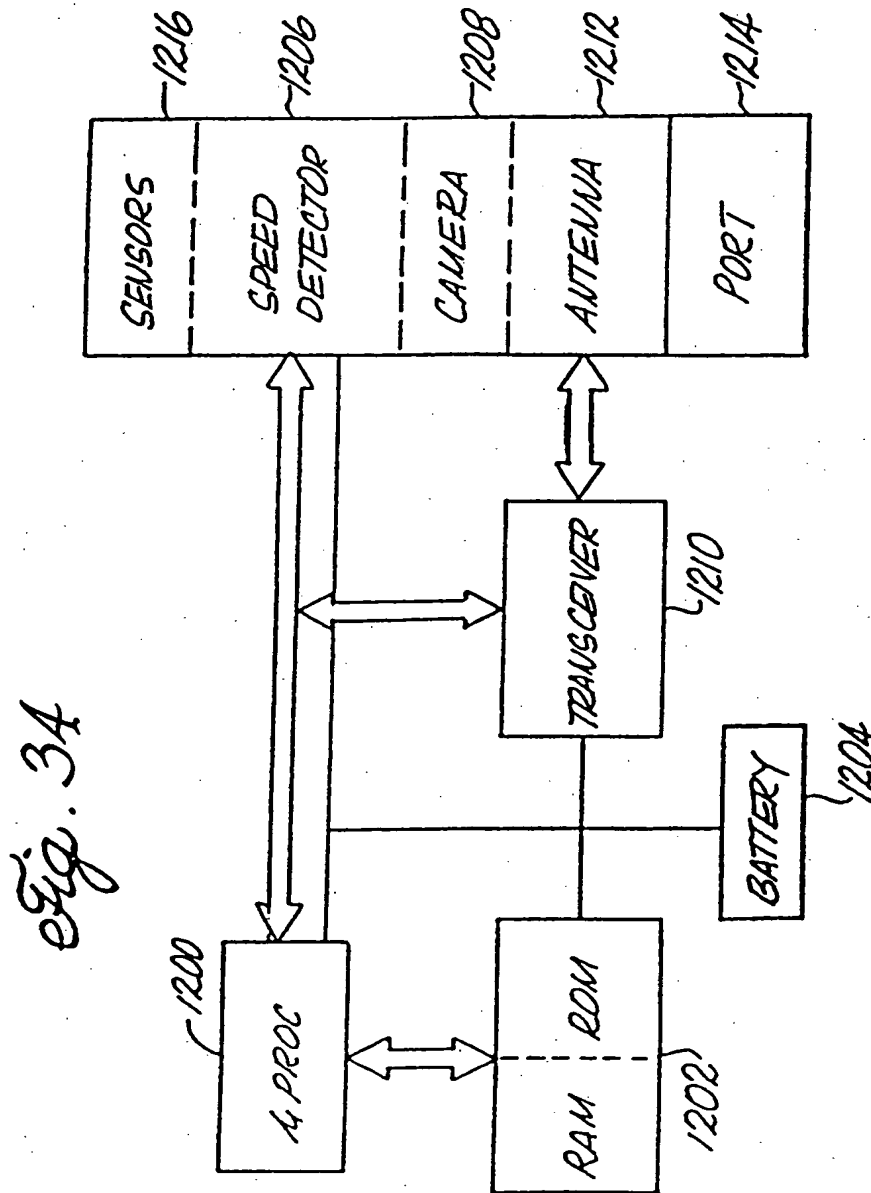


FIGURE 33



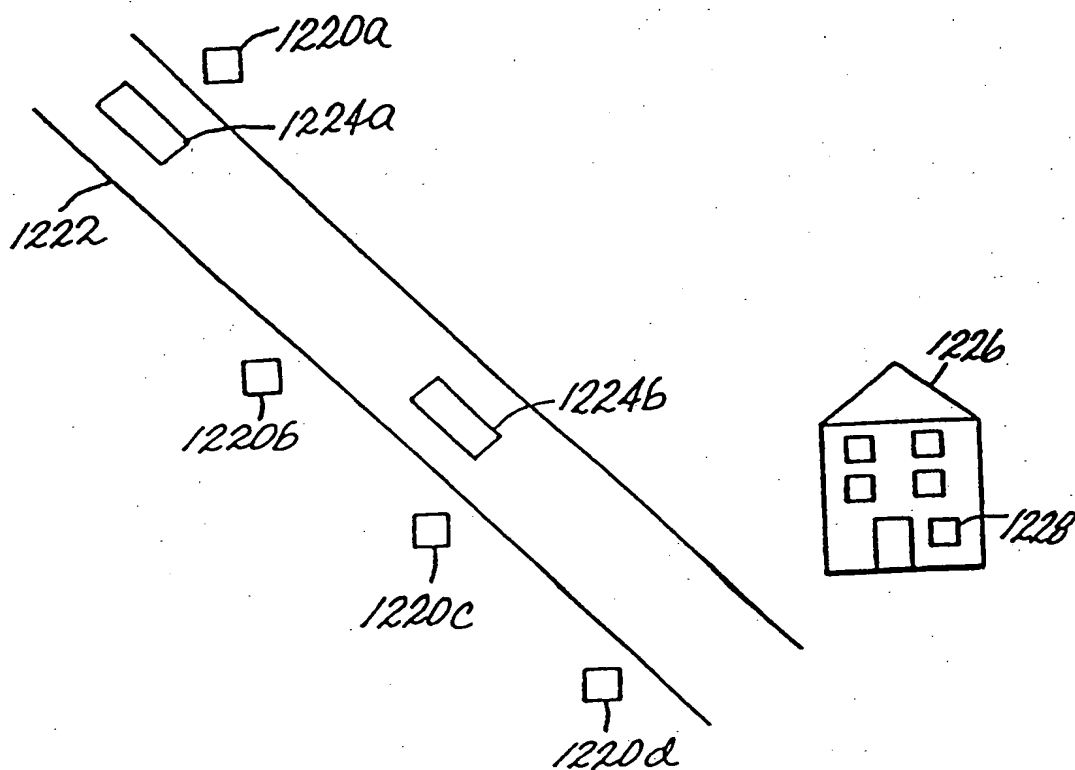


Fig. 35

Fig. 36

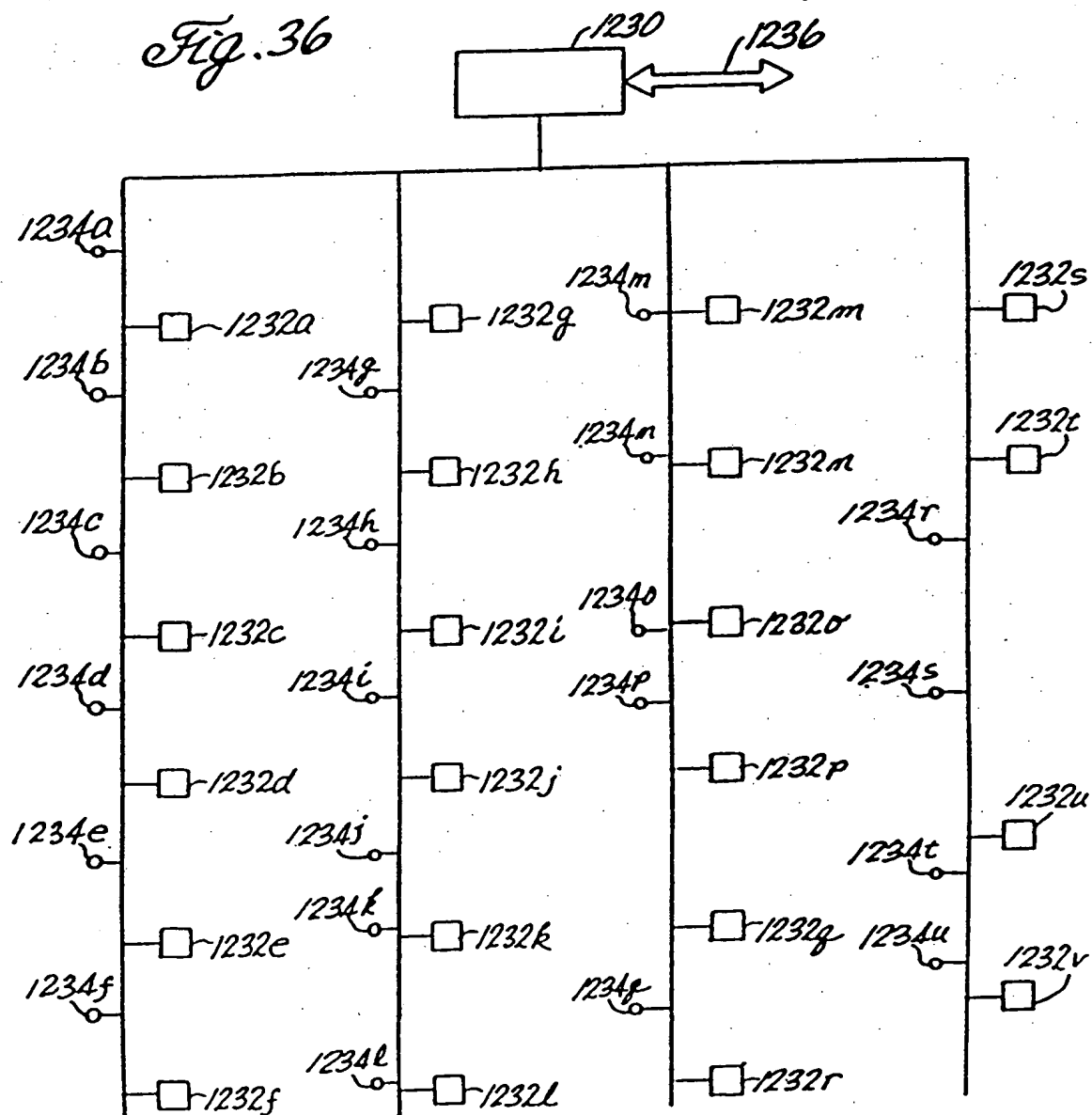


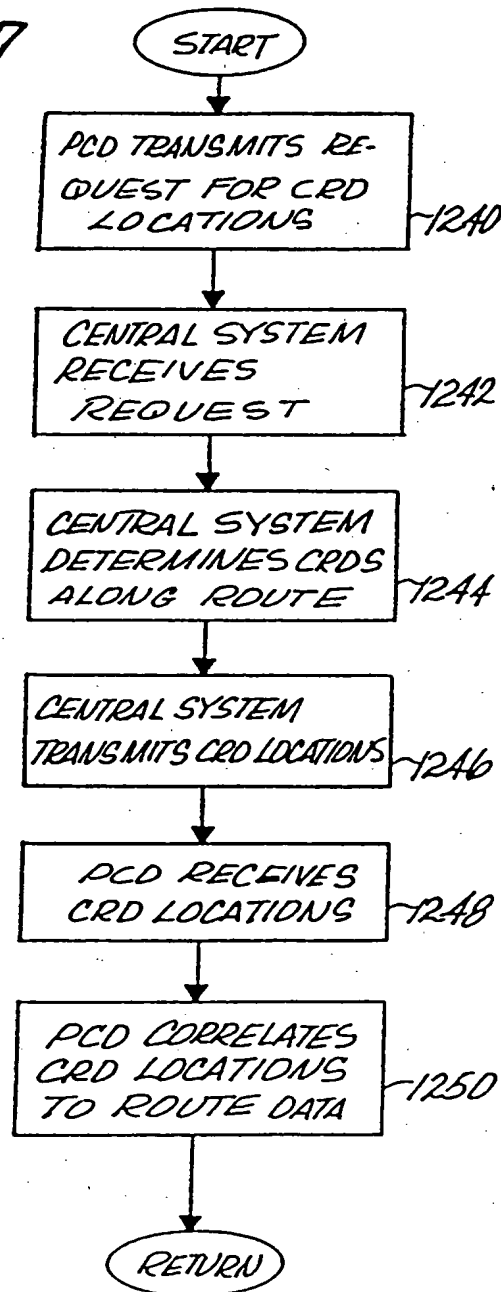
Fig. 37

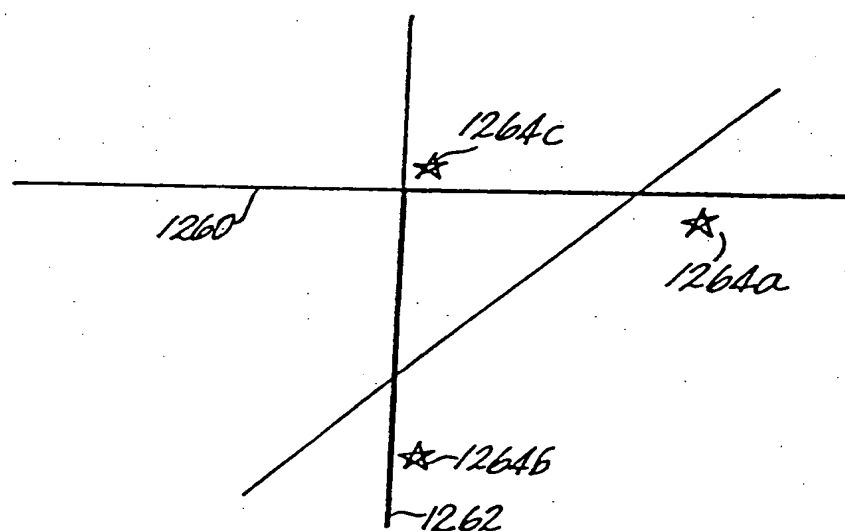
Fig. 38

Fig. 39

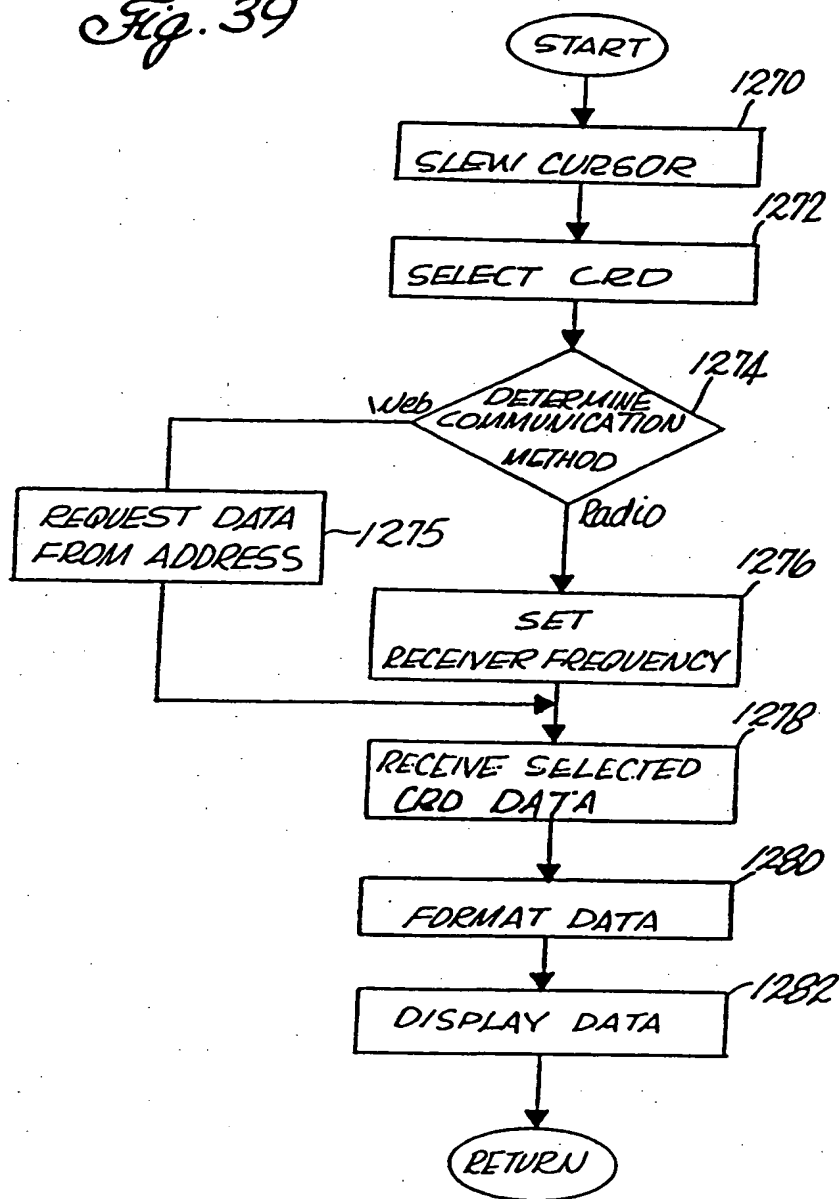
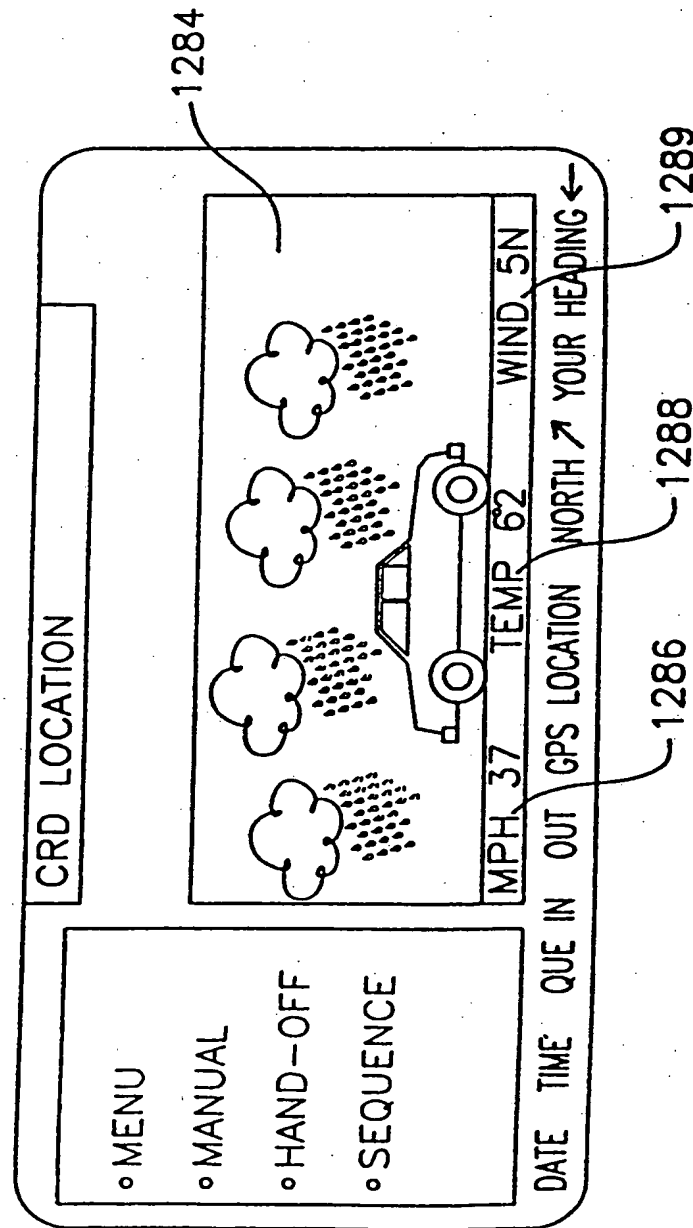
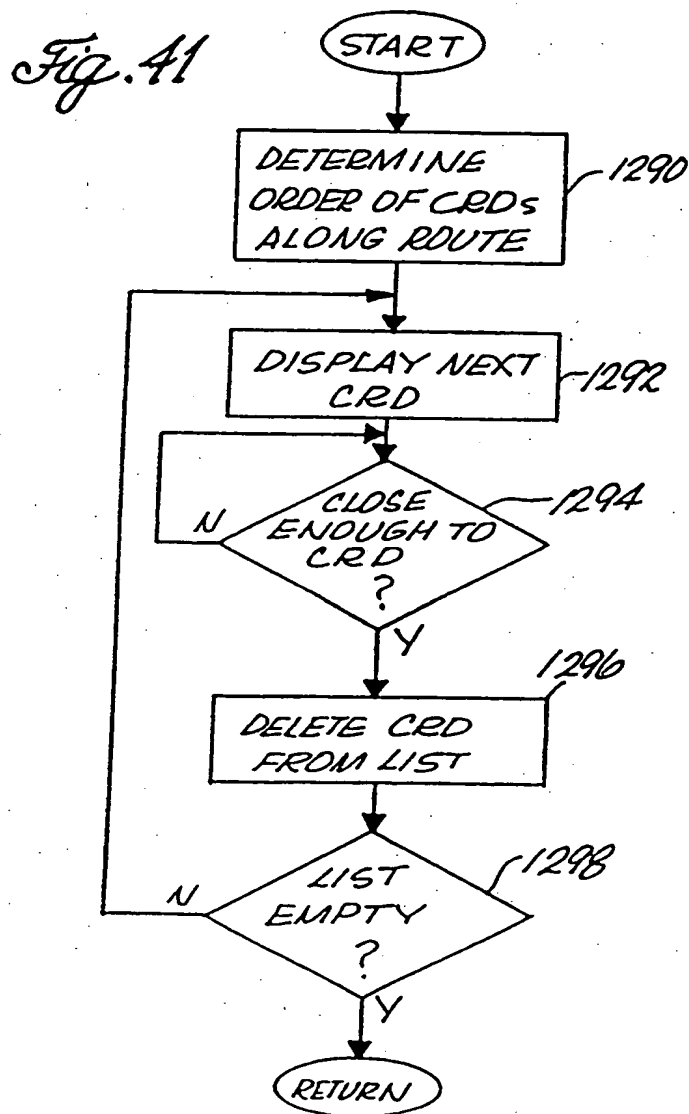
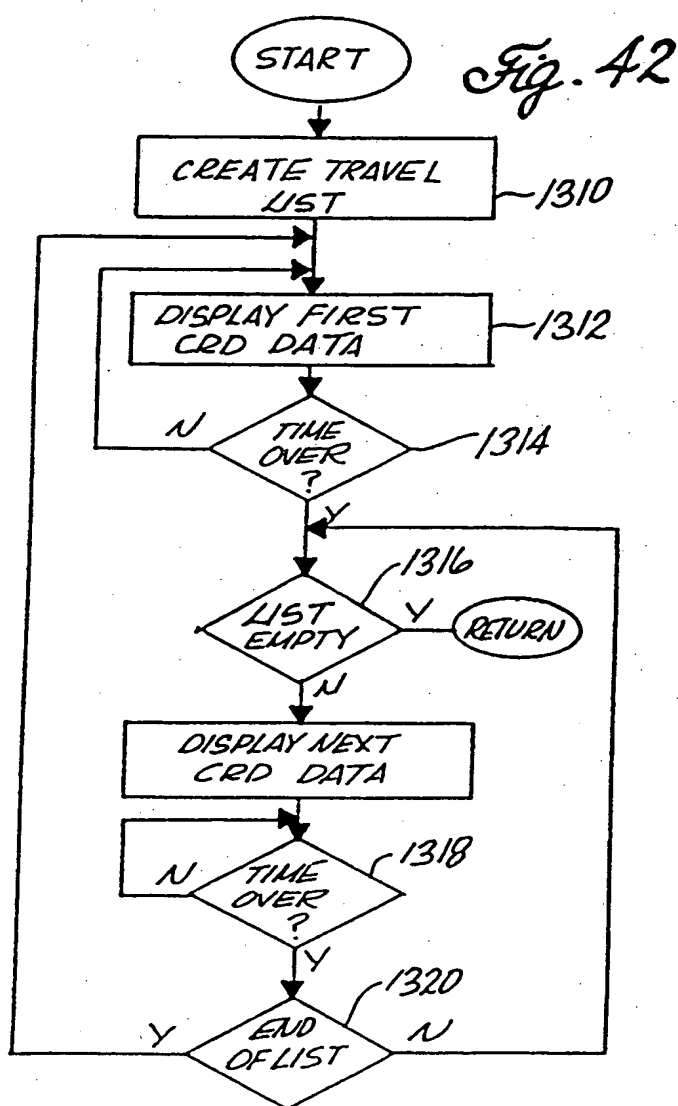


FIG. 40







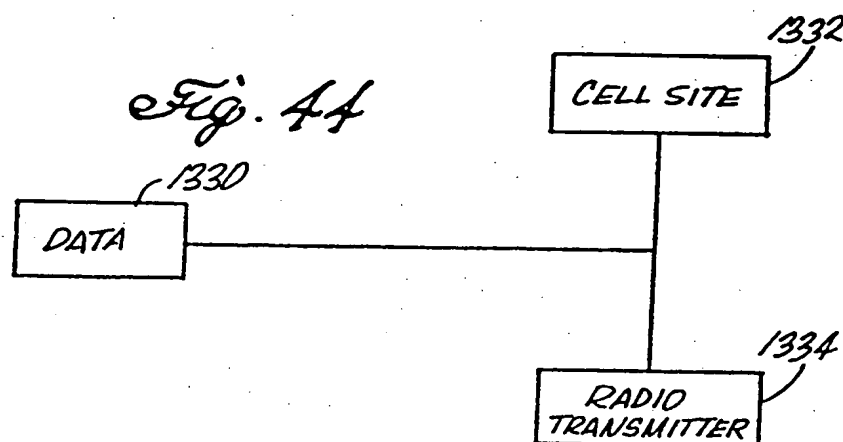
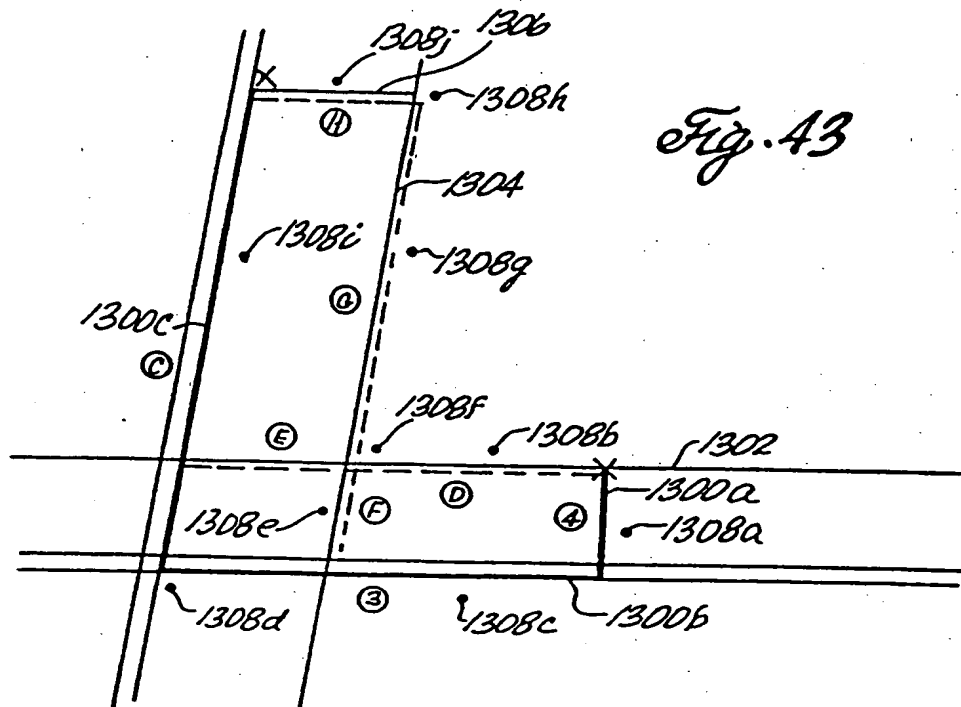
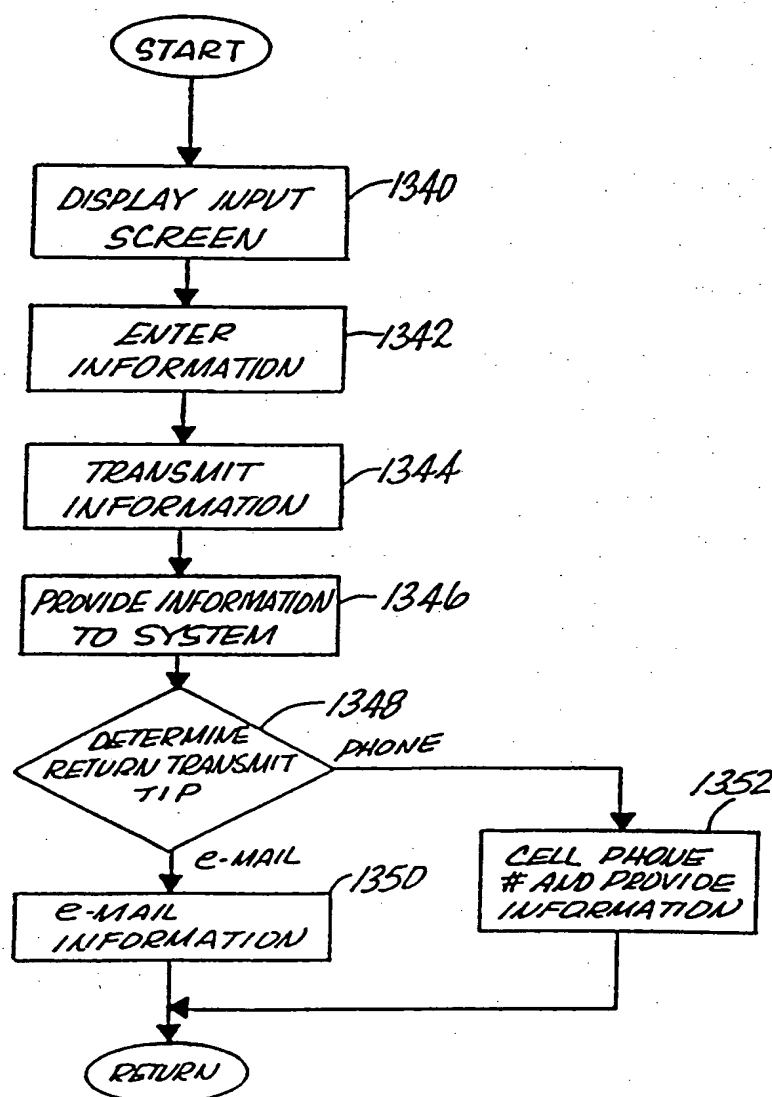


Fig. 45

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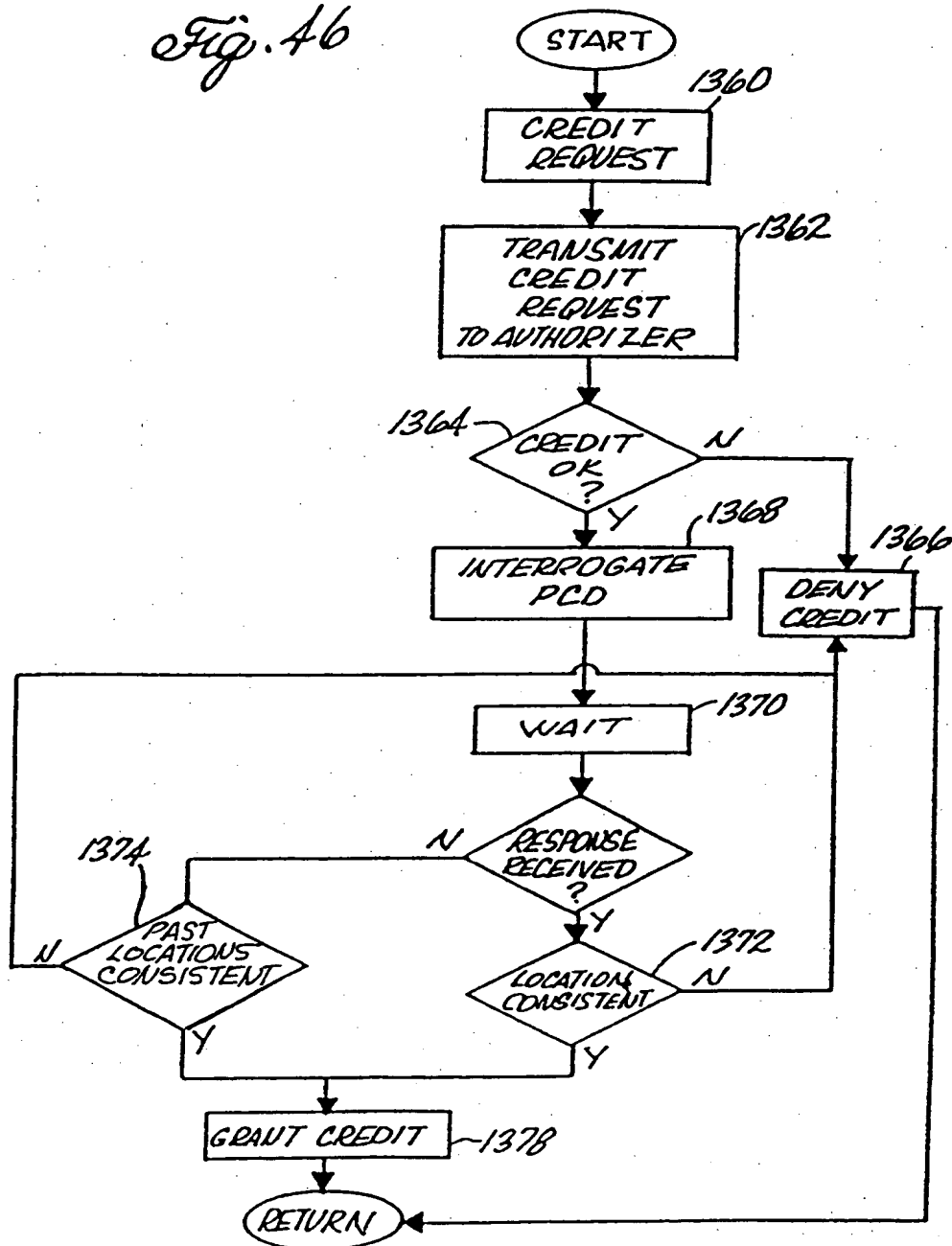
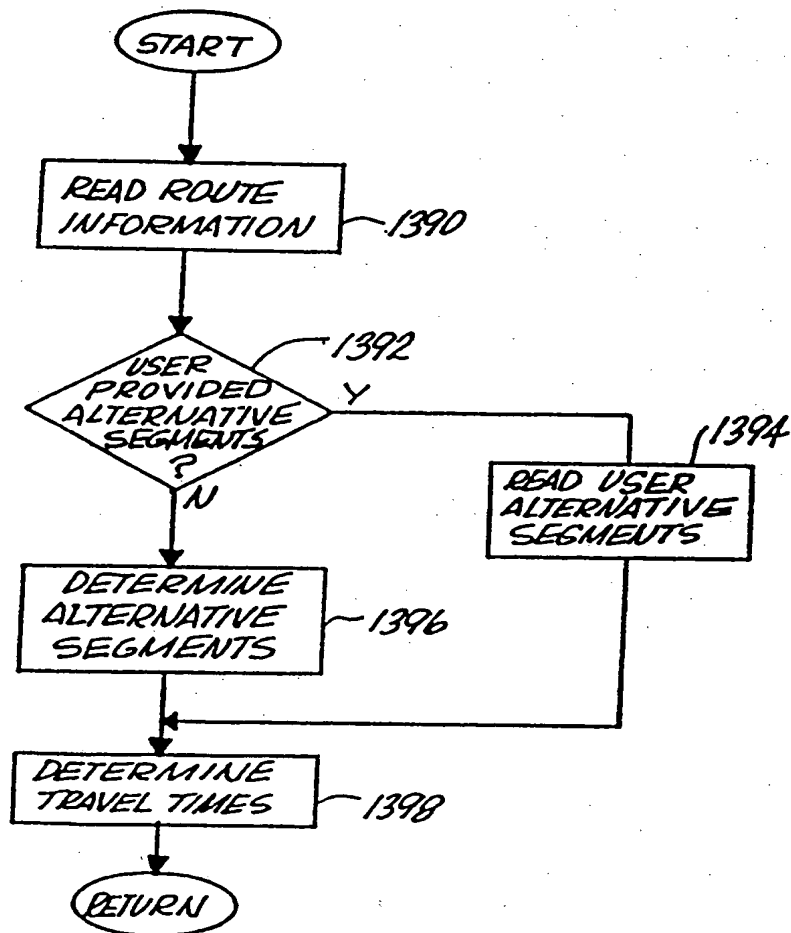


Fig. 47



INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT

 International application No.
 PCT/US99/15637

A. CLASSIFICATION OF SUBJECT MATTER

IPC(6) : G08B 1/09; G08G 1/123

US CL : Please See Extra Sheet.

According to International Patent Classification (IPC) or to both national classification and IPC

B. FIELDS SEARCHED

Minimum documentation searched (classification system followed by classification symbols)

U.S. : 340/905, 988, 990, 991, 995; 701/117, 118, 119, 201, 202, 207, 208, 209, 211, 212, 213

Documentation searched other than minimum documentation to the extent that such documents are included in the fields searched
noneElectronic data base consulted during the international search (name of data base and, where practicable, search terms used)
none

C. DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT

Category*	Citation of document, with indication, where appropriate, of the relevant passages	Relevant to claim No.
Y	US 5,699,056 A (YOSHIDA) 16 December 1997, whole document, especially Figs. 2-3 & 9 and corresponding disclosure.	1-21.
Y	US 5,543,789 A (BEHR et al.) 06 August 1996, Fig. 1 and corresponding disclosure.	1-21.
A	US 5,504,482 A (SCHREDER) 02 April 1996, Fig. 1 and corresponding disclosure.	1-21.
A	US 5,539,645 A (MANDHYAN et al.) 23 July 1996, Figs. 1-2 and corresponding disclosure.	1-21.
A	US 5,604,676 A (PENZIAS) 18 February 1997, Figs. 1-2 & 5 and corresponding disclosure.	1-21.

☒ Further documents are listed in the continuation of Box C.
 ☐ See patent family annex.

* Special categories of cited documents:	*T* later document published after the international filing date or priority date and not in conflict with the application but cited to understand the principle or theory underlying the invention
A document defining the general state of the art which is not considered to be of particular relevance	*X* document of particular relevance; the claimed invention cannot be considered novel or cannot be considered to involve an inventive step when the document is taken alone
E earlier document published on or after the international filing date	*Y* document of particular relevance; the claimed invention cannot be considered to involve an inventive step when the document is combined with one or more other such documents, such combination being obvious to a person skilled in the art
L document which may throw doubts on priority claim(s) or which is cited to establish the publication date of another citation or other special reason (as specified)	*A* document member of the same patent family
O document referring to an oral disclosure, use, exhibition or other means	
P document published prior to the international filing date but later than the priority date claimed	

 Date of the actual completion of the international search
 05 OCTOBER 1999

Date of mailing of the international search report

01 NOV 1999

 Name and mailing address of the ISA/US
 Commissioner of Patents and Trademarks
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 BENJAMIN C. LEE

Telephone No. (703) 305-0412

INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT

International application No.
PCT/US99/15637

C (Continuation). DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT

Category*	Citation of document, with indication, where appropriate, of the relevant passages	Relevant to claim No.
A	US 5,774,070 A (RENDON) 30 June 1998, Fig. 1 and corresponding disclosure.	1-21.

INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT

International application No.
PCT/US99/15637

Box I Observations where certain claims were found unsearchable (Continuation of item 1 of first sheet)

This international report has not been established in respect of certain claims under Article 17(2)(a) for the following reasons:

1. ☐ Claims Nos.:
because they relate to subject matter not required to be searched by this Authority, namely:
2. ☐ Claims Nos.:
because they relate to parts of the international application that do not comply with the prescribed requirements to such an extent that no meaningful international search can be carried out, specifically:
3. ☐ Claims Nos.:
because they are dependent claims and are not drafted in accordance with the second and third sentences of Rule 6.4(a).

Box II Observations where unity of invention is lacking (Continuation of item 2 of first sheet)

This International Searching Authority found multiple inventions in this international application, as follows:

Please See Extra Sheet.

1. ☐ As all required additional search fees were timely paid by the applicant, this international search report covers all searchable claims.
2. ☐ As all searchable claims could be searched without effort justifying an additional fee, this Authority did not invite payment of any additional fee.
3. ☐ As only some of the required additional search fees were timely paid by the applicant, this international search report covers only those claims for which fees were paid, specifically claims Nos.:
4. ☒ No required additional search fees were timely paid by the applicant. Consequently, this international search report is restricted to the invention first mentioned in the claims; it is covered by claims Nos.:
1-21

Remark on Protest

- ☐ The additional search fees were accompanied by the applicant's protest.
☐ No protest accompanied the payment of additional search fees.

INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT

International application No.
PCT/US99/15637

A. CLASSIFICATION OF SUBJECT MATTER:

US CL :

340/905, 988, 990, 991, 995; 701/117, 118, 119, 201, 202, 207, 208, 209, 211, 212, 213

BOX II. OBSERVATIONS WHERE UNITY OF INVENTION WAS LACKING

This ISA found multiple inventions as follows:

This application contains the following inventions or groups of inventions which are not so linked as to form a single inventive concept under PCT Rule 13.1. In order for all inventions to be searched, the appropriate additional search fees must be paid.

Group I, claim(s) 1-21, drawn to a condition reporting and displaying device for a vehicle.

Group II, claim(s) 22-33, drawn to a CTV data distribution system.

Group III, claim(s) 34-42, drawn to position monitoring & reporting.

Group IV, claim(s) 43-48, drawn to a computer based credit authorization method.

Group V, claim(s) 49-54, drawn to an intelligent subscriber tracking system.

Group VI, claim 55, drawn to a computer database.

The inventions listed as Groups I-VI do not relate to a single inventive concept under PCT Rule 13.1 because, under PCT Rule 13.2, they lack the same or corresponding special technical features for the following reasons:

The special technical feature of group I is directed to the reporting of sensed vehicle traffic condition(s) and displaying of downloaded map and location information.

The special technical feature of group II is directed to the distribution of a cable television signal.

The special technical feature of group III is directed to the reporting of a requested mobile location.

The special technical feature of group IV is directed to a method of determining credit authorization.

The special technical feature of group V is directed to the determination of an active communication device based on contact and location information.

The special technical feature of group VI is directed to a computer database for packetizing map data responsive to a request.

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